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d20 INDUSTRY NEWS, DOWNER & INTRODUCING MT. ZOGON

In This Issue

Dungeon

"By day the sun cast a wan maroon gloom across the land; by night all was dark and still, with only a few pale stars to post the old constellations. Time went at a languid pace, without purpose and urgency, and folk made few long-range plans."

Jack Vance
Rhialto the Marvellous

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Scott Peterson
This tall chamber is composed of rings of ancient crypts. Do they hold the heroes of old? Or possibly the villains? Maybe the giant headless statue that serves as the crypt's centerpiece holds the key. A D&D "Critical Threat."

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Peter Aperlo
A minion of chaos has come to the Prime Material Plane from the void of the Far Realms to terrorize and conquer in the name of its masters. The PCs must act quickly to assemble a legendary artifact powerful enough to weaken the minion so it can be defeated. A D&D adventure for four 14th-level PCs.

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Seth Spencer
The drow train marvelous servants, but when one of their minions grows a spine and escapes, it makes for a deadly encounter. The choker Phyx is just such an enemy. His assassin training combined with his natural choker abilities make him a potent foe. A D&D "Critical Threat."

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On the Cover: *Mark Zug paints Hu'shurish the efreeti barbarian and artisan. He rules his brass tower, guarding one of the relics needed to assemble the primal anchor in "Quadripartite."*

POLYHEDRON

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Adam Jortner

Locathah have invaded, or so it seems. But why, after all these peaceful years, have the fish creatures abandoned their home? The PCs must journey to the flooded village of Waterford and delve into the past to discover the cause of the current commotion and uncover the secret history of the region. A D&D adventure for four 5th-level PCs.

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Jeff Quick

Former *Polyhedron* Editor Jeff Quick drops by to deliver the most daring Mini-Game yet. Try out nonviolent conflict resolution with *Hijinx*, a rock 'n' roll lollapalooza inspired by the fun-loving musical cartoons of our youth. Strap on a guitar, hire an annoyingly intelligent pet, and get ready to meddle.

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Downer 46

Our resident drow dungeon guard faces off against Tagget the halfling and runs afoul of a new enemy.

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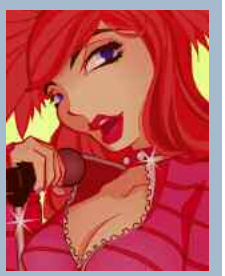
On the Flipside: *Cover artists Jason Martin and Heather McCollum of Artplaymix bring us a colorful rendition of rockin' crimesolvers to commemorate* Hijinx, *this issue's* Polyhedron *Mini-Game. Erik and Kyle will be touring with the band until next issue.*



View from the Other Side

For the past few months, *Dungeon* Editor Chris Thomasson has regaled you with tales from our weekly playtest of the new **Adventure Path: Shackled City**, which started with "Life's Bazaar," in issue #97 and continued with "Flood Season" last issue. The next installment will appear in issue #102, which gives me a chance to sneak in and tell you about the campaign from the perspective of one of the players.

Chris likes to focus on our mistakes, mentioning twice now that we were, in fact, "industry professionals" who should know better. I'd like to point out that there's one very good reason why Chris focuses on these mistakes in his editorials. Messing up is pretty much the only thing we do reliably or well.

To bring you up to speed: *Dragon* Editor Jesse Decker replaced the lost druid Hallan with a cleric of Fharlanghn named Podo, friend to Matt Sernett's new character, Kodo (*Dragon* editors sure love them some *Beastmaster*). Newbie Web Developer Rob Head replaced the departed Meechee with Brien, an elven barbarian. The rest of us kept on keeping on with the same old characters from the first installment. To make a long story short, the villainous Tongueater ate Brien and Podo, proving that his tastes extend far beyond what his name suggests.

My character, Mestiphar the Magnificent, survived the way he's always survived when the going gets tough—by not coming to the dangerous sessions. Even though the playtest has scored one of the highest kill-rates of any campaign I've ever played, I've been lucky enough to be on vacation or tight deadlines each time a character has been killed. Whether my character's survival comes from pure luck, karma, or insider knowledge is, of course, a private matter between me, my boss, and the DM.

Here are some things I've learned along the way. A "Diary of a Survivor," if you will.

Come Early, Come Often

When you miss a session, no matter the reason, you're putting your friends at risk. That's not to say you should enslave your life to the schedule of the game, but it's worth factoring the risk to other players when you decide not to show up to a session. DMs often plan expecting everyone to be there. By the time you've gotten stuck in traffic or decided to blow off the game, it's likely too late for the DM to scale down his encounters. Nearly every time a fellow PC has died in the last two campaigns I've played, it's been on a day when a couple players were absent.

Initiative Cards Help

When we playtest at work, we generally go for about an hour and a half. That's not a lot of time, so it's best to cut away anything that's not actually playing the game. Chris used to track initiative on a whiteboard, scrolling through turns in a fairly clumsy fashion that slowed down the game. We finally convinced him to use initiative cards produced by The Game Mechanics (www.thegamemechanics.com) and the difference is remarkable. Check them out online or just make some cards of your own with ordinary 3 × 5 inch index cards. You won't be sorry.

The Fiend Folio is an Enemy to All Players

The first couple **Shackled City** adventures used creatures from the recently published *Fiend Folio*. The book's very popular around the Paizo offices, since four of our editors participated in writing it. It's also been very unpopular because creatures from it have killed almost a half-dozen PCs. Last week, the combination of a particularly nasty pit trap and a swarm of blood-bloaters almost took out half the party. All of us have been anxiously awaiting meeting our own creations in combat. At this rate, few of us expect to survive, and we've got only ourselves to blame.

Erik

Dungeon

Group Publisher **Johnny Wilson**
Dungeon Editor **Chris Thomasson**
Polyhedron Editor **Erik Mona**
Dungeon Art Director **Sean Glenn**
Polyhedron Art Director **Kyle S. Hunter**

Contributing Editors **Penny Williams, Christopher Perkins**

Production Director **John Dunn**
Prepress Manager **Matt Beals**
Production Designer **Theresa Cummins**
Circulation Director **Pierce Watters**
Advertising Sales Director **Johnny Wilson**
Ad Traffic Manager **Dawnelle Miesner**
Dungeon Cover Artist **Mark Zug**
Polyhedron Cover Artist **Jason Martin & Heather McCollum**

Contributing Authors
Peter E. Aperlo, Adam Jortner, Scott Peterson, Jeff Quick, Seth Spencer

Contributing Artists
Tom Baxa, Peter Bergting, Jeff Carlisle, Dave Crosland, Kyle S. Hunter, Rey Lewis, C. Scott Morse, Jake Parker, Wayne Reynolds, Stan Shaw, Stan!, Chris West, Mark Zug

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Paizo Publishing, LLC
3245 146th Place SE, Suite 110
Bellevue, WA 98007

Chief Executive Officer **Lisa Stevens**
President **Johnny L. Wilson**
Director of Marketing **Mary Franklin**
Technical Director **Vic Wertz**
Corporate Administrator **Wailam Wilson**

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I Wanna Praise You...

I'd first like to applaud issue #97. I found all the adventures within to be nothing short of exhilarating. My players especially enjoyed "Life's Bazaar," by Chris Perkins (another tally on the hit-list, Chris!). We used this module as a break from the higher-level campaign my players are currently tackling. They seemed to appreciate the idea of running two separate worlds, and it gave them a second wind when going back to the master campaign.

Now I'd like to address a few of the letters published in the last couple issues regarding people concerned about the use of both drugs and mature content as gaming material. Grow up. What you are really saying is that death and violence are fine, but your kids shouldn't be introduced to otherworldly threats.

It seems to me that these issues are going to eventually find them in some way, and what better way than through the filtered advice of the parent or guardian?

You know, it only takes a few minutes for a DM worth his weight in BittleSnags (which is what my rogue PC calls anything without value) to simply alter the adventure to fit into your impenetrable G-rated game. If kids were trying to hunt down adult material, there are many other contending magazines that come to mind.

To close, I just want to say "good job and keep it up" to the staff of *Dungeon Magazine*. It's my favorite thing to find in my mailbox (other than the occasional 6-digit inheritance from that great-uncle I've never met). Although I am not a fan of *Polyhedron*, I'm not going to let that technicality null my appreciation for *Dungeon*. I praise thee.

Hmm, publish this and I'll renew my subscription . . . bah, I'll do it anyway.

James Bethany ("Gargamel")
Vie Email

Can we still publish your letter?
—Erik Mona

Frown Now Upside Down

I must say I walked into my local bookstore with a frown on my face. Shall I buy this issue of *Dungeon?* I asked myself. Last issue was below average, and the one with vile content didn't interest me not so much because it was vile, but because it struck me as boring.

I picked up issue #97. Oh look, I muttered, a cartoony beholder. I flipped inside, however, and found I had struck gold!

I'd like to congratulate you guys on *Dungeon* #97! It has to be one of my

favorites thus far. "Demonblade" was a brilliant adventure, and I'm very happy with the new **Adventure Path: Shackled City**. It thrills me that the adventure consists of so many pages, because my group hasn't had a long one since "Tears for Twilight Hollow" (*Dungeon* #90). "Blind Man's Bluff" has given me loads of adventure ideas.

Also, this issue of *Polyhedron* was by far the best *ever*. I have been thinking of DMing a World War II campaign for the last while, but didn't know how.

Vile content? I don't see what all the hype about it is. If a father wants to use Dungeons & Dragons for his kid, let him. So what if he sees a label that says "Porphyry House of Horror." Unless he's a reincarnated surgeon, he won't be able to open the sealed section without tearing it. Better yet, why doesn't the father take it out of the magazine and throw it away? *Wow!* What a concept!

My advice, however, is to omit the vile content. My sentiments? You may lose reader's by including vile content, but I for one won't burn my subscription because I don't see Satan's house of gore on the front cover.

Andreas Palalas
Via Email

Youth Chimes in on Vile Debate

I have roleplayed for about a year now, but just started reading your magazine with issue #96.

I have read the letters that were submitted regarding the sealed content in issue #95. Now, I didn't buy that issue, but as I understand it, the sealed section caused some complaints.

I have seen many replies to this section with negative feedback regarding children. As I am a DM for a group of 14- and 13-year-olds, I buy D&D stuff. However, if I tried to buy a book called *The Book of Vile Darkness* or a magazine with a sealed section, my parents would forbid it.

The way I see it, it's the parents' responsibility to monitor this kind of thing. If I had bought it through a subscription, however, my parents would have just cut it out, thrown it away, then given me my magazine back.

Also, regarding the "mature tone" letter in issue #97 about drug use, I think it was handled very well [in *Dungeon* #96's "Pandemonium in the Veins"]. My group could tell it helped a little, but then hurt in the long run. One guy tried some to get a boost, but lost some permanent Constitution and so immediately stopped. I think that the drug use was shown in a very negative light which proved a point very well. I applaud you for your portrayal of drugs as a bad thing!

Your 14-year-old DM,
Sam Kerr

Freshness Valued

I'll start by saying that I think your magazine has revolutionized the way people perceive roleplaying games today. I've been playing D&D for nineteen years, and I have seen enough change to boggle the mind. People who don't "get" the game cannot understand why I have $3,000 worth of rules in my bookshelves, or spend hours developing plots and personalities for my adventures.

"Aren't you going to ever grow up?"

"You mean you still play that game?"

Sometimes I feel that at heart I'm still that 10-year-old, sneaking my

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books from under my bed at night.

D&D is more than just a game. It is an extension of our reality. It is an expression of a life that we, deep down, wish we could be a part of. A place where good can always triumph over evil, and where death is not the end, just a delay. It is a sense of control in today's world, which we have no control over.

Then again, it is just a game. A couple rulebooks and ten bucks for a magazine full of adventures and hours of fun. But wait. John "I've been a gamer for 300 years, and the original rules and original setting are better, and the game's gone commercial" Doe decides today's game has lost something—that fancy magazines and fresh new perspectives somehow distort the true meaning of the game. If you have to measure the game's worth against your self-proclaimed superiority, I pity you.

Games evolve. They change daily, like it or not. True gamers evolve with them. I feel sorry for anyone who feels today's game has not improved from yesterday's game.

A fresh revised ruleset or flashy magazine cover does not hurt the game's integrity. A gamer with a superiority complex does. So next time you bash the game, the material, or the people who strive to make a better game for tomorrow, don't. It's bad enough we get negativity from the people who don't "get" it. What's disappointing is when we get the same from the people who should. *Dungeon*, keep up the good work.

Trevor Surette
Yarmouth, Nova Scotia
Canada

Forgive Me, Father

I write to confess my sin: I wasted good money on an adventure published by another gaming company [company name withheld because we're nice editors]. At my gaming store, I perused numerous adventures, hoping to find an adventure suitable to the level of the PCs in my campaign. Based on the description on the back of one of these modules, I thought I had found the perfect adventure for my characters. But when I got home and removed the plastic covering from this module, I discovered numerous flaws that made me regret my purchase.

First off, the module's word content seemed to be no greater than that of the average *Dungeon* adventure. That might not sound so bad, but, in a single *Dungeon* issue, I get four or five adventures, all for a cost, with my subscription, of about half what I paid for this one module!

To make matters worse, I further found that the adventure was highly location-specific and therefore almost impossible to adapt to my own setting. For example, and this is important to the adventure, the city where the adventure begins presumed a dwarven city founded by "an aggressive dwarven empire" that had launched a war against a neighboring human kingdom!

Furthermore, one of the first encounters involves chasing some thieves into the foundry that makes the *cannons* for the city's navy. Ugh. In this module, the NPCs' speech sounded unrealistic, the narrative straightjacketed the PCs' actions along a predetermined course, and the readable text blocks frequently had the PCs taking specific actions.

Furthermore, the module provided no notes for adapting the adventure to other settings, nor even for adapting the adventure to characters of varying levels. As a working adult, my mistake cost me nothing I could not afford. However, I wish there were a way I could warn your other readers, especially the young ones, not to make the same mistake I made. I would tell them that other gaming companies cannot even come close to matching the value *Dungeon Magazine* provides. I hereby declare myself officially spoiled by the quality of *Dungeon Magazine*.

Jon Rariden
Lilburn, GA

And we hereby declare ourselves officially spoiled by letters like Jon's. Thanks for the kind words!

The birth of the d20 License has vastly

expanded the options for your roleplaying dollar. You've now got more adventures to choose from than ever before.

While a few of those companies offer slick production values and nice-looking covers, very few have been in the business as long as Dungeon *has. Believe it or not, most of the suggestions in the* Dungeon *Writer's Guidelines came from years of feedback from readers just like you. From "Scaling the Adventure" sidebars to not forcing the action of PCs in boxed text, we've funneled our experience into creating the most user-friendly adventures in the industry. We're always glad to hear that our plans have worked for our readers. —Erik Mona*

Where's Godlike?

I am a big fan of the *Polyhedron* comic *Godlike*, and really love the work done on it. There is something I noted in the latest *Polyhedron* issue:

1. It was based around WW II.
2. There was no "next issue: . . ." at the end of the latest and greatest *Godlike* comic.

Will there be any more *Godlike* comics? I sure hope the comic continues, for I really, really love it.

Jonathan Adams
Via Email

Good news, bad news time. Godlike *was originally planned as a self-contained six-installment story. The comic in* Dungeon *#97 marked the last time it will appear in these pages. Although writer/author Dennis Detwiller doesn't have plans to continue the strip elsewhere, he does have plenty of plans for the* Godlike *RPG. Interested folks can check out the news on* Godlike *at the site of the game's new publisher, Arc Dream Publishing (www.arcdream.com).*

On the good news front, last issue saw the debut of Godlike's *replacement,* Downer, *by our very own Art Director Kyle Hunter. We'll keep publishing the exploits of the down-on-his-luck drow as long as Kyle keeps writing and drawing them. We love* Downer *around the office, and hope you grow to welcome him into your homes. Or at least into the magazine. —Erik Mona*

CRITICAL THREATS

BY SCOTT PETERSON
ARTWORK BY JEFF CARLISLE

COLOSSAL CRYPT

A pale luminescence from below outlines a gigantic headless statue that fills the center of this cylindrical burial chamber. It appears that the statue is that of a bare-chested, male humanoid. Symbols are carved all over the chest and arms of the figure, giving it a tattooed look. The outstretched arms cradle a smooth, circular object between long, claw-like fingers.

Looking down, you can see the source of the light. Heavy patches of a strange, glowing fungus appear to be floating in a body of murky water that rises to just below the statue's knees. Smaller patches dot the interior walls of the cylinder as well as parts of the statue. Jutting from the water is the statue's head. Elongated and smooth, it has a slender nose, jutting chin, and large, lidless eyes. Bits of the fungus have grown around its eyes, now giving them an odd radiance.

Four levels have been carved into the stone above the waterline; 75 feet separates each tier. Every level holds numerous open niches—each 20 feet wide and 10 feet deep. Within each rests a sarcophagus cut from beautiful white and gray-veined marble. Ensconced behind each bier is a single torch casting a greenish flame. Strange symbols, similar in appearance to those tattooed on the central statue, cover every stone surface within each niche, while man-sized statues—of the same race as the center sculpture—flank the sides of each niche. Each wears a cloak and clutches a long staff topped with a fist-sized orb.

Two sets of stairs wrap around support pillars rising from opposite ends of the crypt. Landings allow you to step off and explore the lower levels of this massive chamber.

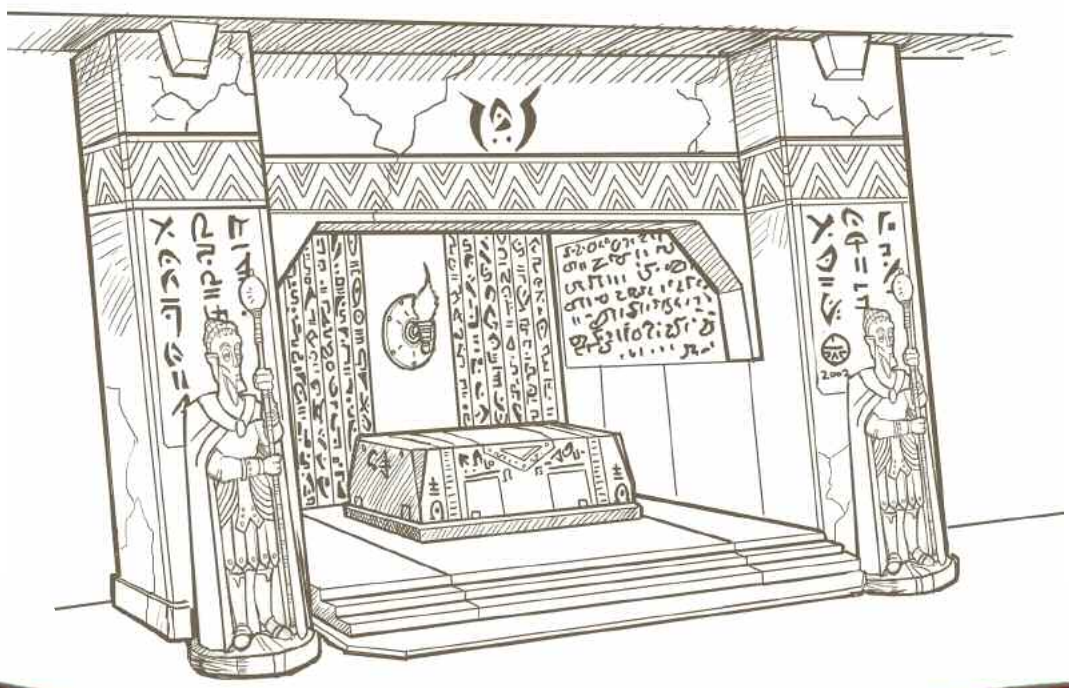
TACTICS

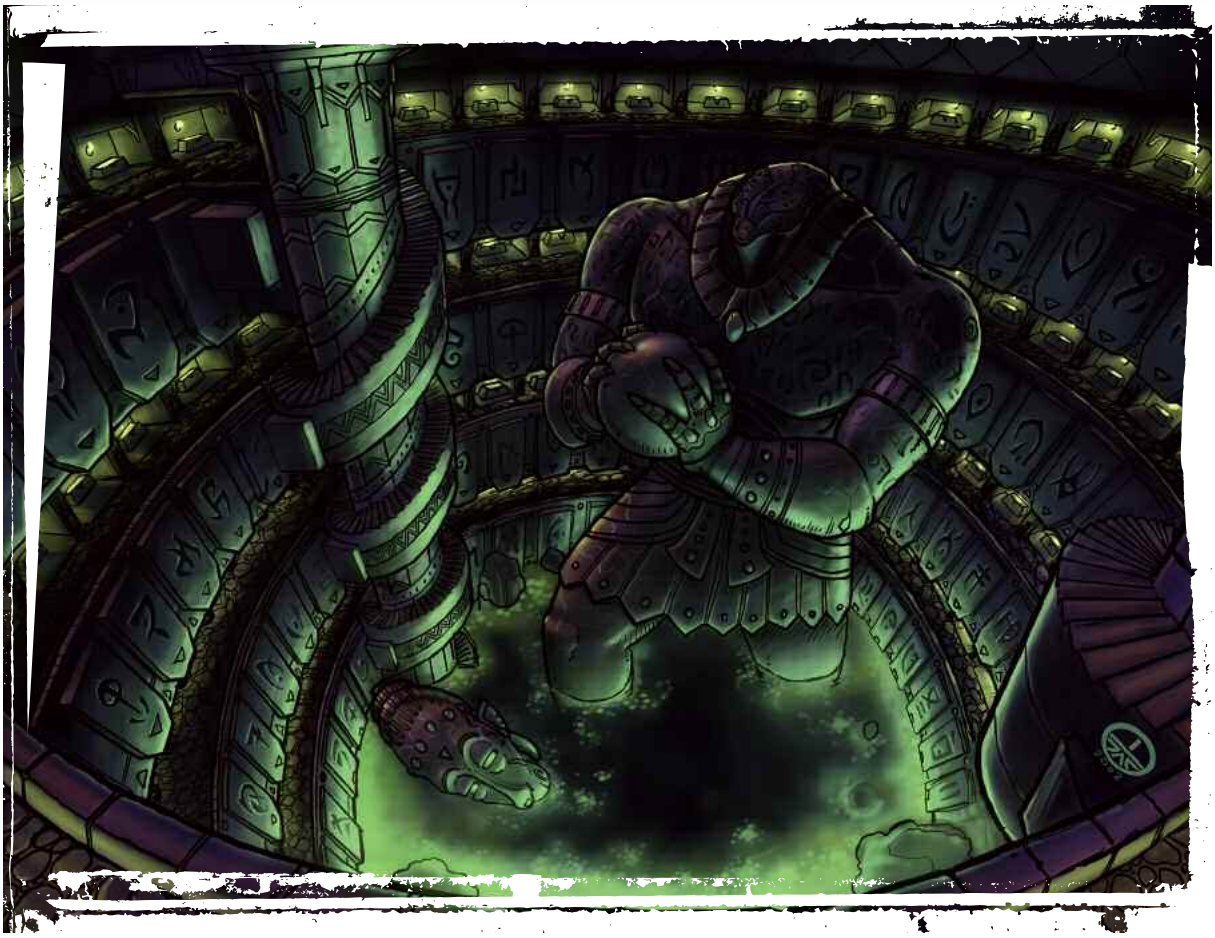
The crypt rises to a height of 400 feet from the bottom of the chamber to the top. The characters enter the room at the uppermost ring, 300 feet from the bottom (275 feet above the water). You can easily make the room larger by inserting more levels between the top and bottom layers. Feel free to alter the description of the statue to suit your campaign. The figure could be a more normal race or something even more monstrous or alien.

The water is 25 feet deep. Characters without a way to breathe underwater must make Swim checks (DC 15) to get a look at the bottom. The water might be fed from an underground spring, or perhaps the crypt is open to the sky over the statue, allowing rain to fill the basin at the base of the crypt. It might be frigid, exposing creatures that fall in to hypothermia, or scalding hot (see the *Dungeon Master's Guide*, page 86). No matter the temperature, anyone who plummets into the water risks drowning (see the *Dungeon Master's Guide*, page 85) Beneath the water is a small mausoleum that rests between the statue's legs, as well as a fifth and final ring.

You might also consider changing the water to some other, more naturally volatile substance. Perhaps the water is acid or magma, and the stone of the crypt magically enhanced to resist the effects of the deadly substance. Perhaps it's not water at all, but a toxic fog that paralyzes or kills those who enter and fail a Fortitude save.

Altering the climate within the room can make it more interesting, as well. If you opt for cold water, perhaps the room is high in the mountains, adding frigid air and slippery stone to the challenges the PCs must deal with. Walking down the stairs might be difficult enough to require Balance checks to avoid falling over the side. Conversely, the chamber might lie near a volcanic range, and the sweltering heat of the chamber makes even the stone hot enough to burn.





The top of the headless statue is an ideal place to stage a climactic battle involving the PCs and an adversary. The villain might lure the PCs to the top of the statue. If combat ensues on the shoulders of the statue, you should require Balance checks (DC 10 or so) each round the PCs take more than a 5-foot step. If the check fails, the PC should make a Reflex save (DC 12) or plummet to the water 275 feet below (Causing 20d6 points of damage). Even if the save is successful, the PC can only hold on helplessly until he can pull himself up (Climb, DC 10).

The stairs and ledges can also become interesting during combat, especially if the PCs get caught on separate levels. The levels and steps have no railings, so opponents should try to knock PCs off the edge of the rings (via bull rush, *telekinesis*, grapple checks, or via other methods). Villains with reach weapons, like longspears or spiked chains, would be especially effective at herding PCs closer to the edge.

The fungus can be harmless of toxic, depending on how much more difficult you wish to make the encounter. It might also be a key component to a spell or ritual, or it might be a component in a binding effect that keep hordes of undead imprisoned in the sarcophagi.

DEVELOPMENT

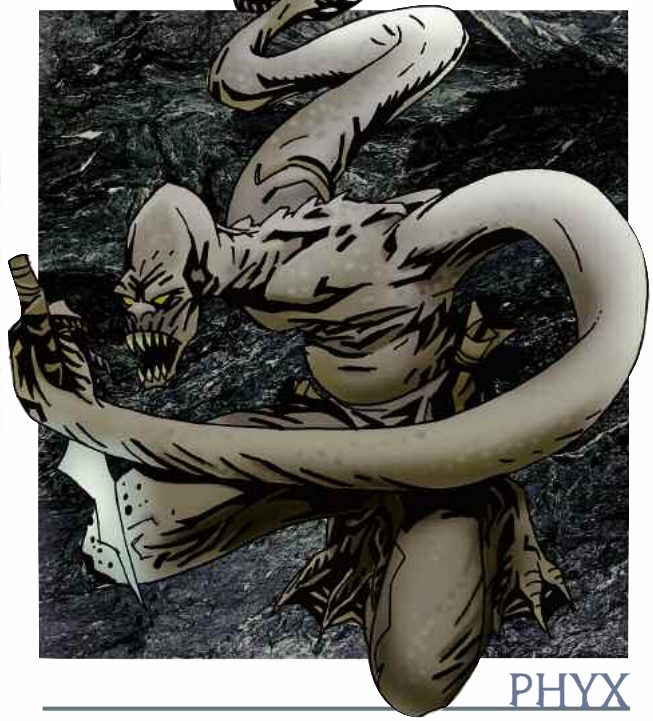
Cleetu, the Vizier for evil King Olantus, has surmised that a powerful magic device is entombed in the mausoleum. The Vizier believes that the circular object the main statue clutches is a depiction of this device, and that the original might be entombed somewhere within. With the device, which is actually a *sphere of annihilation*, he plans to extend Olantus's reign into neighboring peaceful kingdoms.

Inside one of the marbled sarcophagi is an extraplanar portal. To activate it, a person must first incant the "opening" ritual, carved into the lid of the sarcophagus. The two statues that flank this particular niche are actually stone golems that have been given instructions to attack anyone who removes the lid without first reciting the ritual. The portal connects to Sigil, the City of Doors. A squad of githyanki troopers have orders to seize the portal and establish a base of operations near the colossal crypt. With a permanent, secret gate to Sigil, they can invade the Outlands in force. If Sigil falls to the gith, the rest of the Multiverse is open for conquest.

Finally, perhaps the central statue was once a massive, destructive creature controlled by an evil warlord (like a colossal stone golem or a blackstone gigant from the *Fiend Folio*). Only when its head was severed from its body was the creature defeated. A cabal of greater barghest sorcerers seeks to reunite the statue's head with its body and uncover the controlling device that lies deep within a complex reached through the mausoleum between the creature's feet. Ω

CRITICAL THREATS

BY SCOTT PETERSON
ARTWORK BY PETER BERGTING



PHYX

Phyx, Male Choker Rog6/Ftr3/Asn5: CR 16; Small Aberration; HD 3d8+3 plus 11d6+11 plus 3d10+3; hp 100; Init +8; Spd 20 ft., climb 10 ft.; AC 24, touch 15, flat footed 24; BAB +12; Grap +11; Atk +19/+14/+9 melee (1d4+5 plus 1d6 electrical/17–20, +2 *keen shock dagger*), or +16 melee (1d3+3, 2 tentacle slaps); Reach 10 ft.; SA sneak attack +6d6, death attack, improved grab, constrict 1d3+3, haste, poison use; SQ evasion, uncanny dodge (Dex bonus to AC, can't be flanked), darkvision 60 ft., +2 saves vs. poison; AL CE; SV Fort +10, Ref +17, Will +11; Str 16, Dex 18, Con 12, Int 4, Wis 14, Cha 7.

Skills: Balance +6, Climb +13, Disguise +2, Escape Artist +7, Hide +20, Jump +8, Listen +8, Move Silently +16, Spot +9, Tumble +11. *Feats:* Alertness, Combat Reflexes, Dodge, Improved Initiative, Mobility, Spring Attack, Weapon Finesse (dagger).

See the Dungeon Master's *Guide*, page 29, for assassin special attacks and qualities. Note that the save DC for Phyx's death attack is 13.

See the *Monster Manual*, page 36, for choker special attacks and qualities.

Possessions: +2 keen ghost touch shock dagger, dust of disappearance (1 use), *+2 gloves of Dexterity, +4 bracers of armor, cloak of resistance +2, potion of blur, potion of bull's strength, potion of cat's grace, potion of cure moderate wounds, potion of sneaking.*

Found nearly dead by a wandering drow patrol, Phyx was brought up by that house's weapons master for a time, and then thrown in with the house's master of espionage, a sly and cunning drow rogue/sorcerer. Beatings were an everyday occurrence for Phyx, but he managed to survive and hone his skills in the art of infiltration and assassination. His wake up call most every morning came in the form of a *magic missile* from his instructor, and he quickly developed a hatred for all spellcasters—he doesn't recognize any difference in arcane or divine casting.

Over the years, he was used in many covert attacks on other drow houses. When one attack did not go as well as planned, his house was destroyed in retaliation. Phyx took his opportunity to escape that day and fled into the Underdark.

APPEARANCE

Phyx's small, dark form blends easily with the cave walls of the Underdark. He wears nothing but his magic items and belt with a loincloth and a few pouches. His skin is the color of stone and his eyes a dull gray. He tends to hunch over, making himself appear even smaller than he is.

TACTICS

Phyx does not like face to face melee combat; it just isn't his style. He waits, hiding in the shadows until the time is right, and then strikes using his Spring Attack feat and his extra partial action to inflict death attacks on his prey. He goes after anyone that looks like a spellcaster first, and if he sees *magic missiles*, he immediately tries to find a way to kill that foe as soon as possible. He uses his mobility and climb speed to great advantage, and his gray render companion—a massive, slavishly devoted beast Phyx has named Mok—is always nearby for extra muscle. Although a tough opponent, Phyx is still a coward and tries to escape when resistance becomes too heavy.

DEVELOPMENT

Phyx, along with his partner, an advanced (30-HD) gray render, recently stumbled upon a mazelike network of caverns deep in the Underdark populated by a tribe of minotaurs. They dispatched the creatures and took up residence. Phyx has fully explored the complex and discovered many remaining traps; he also has allowed many deadly denizens of the Underdark (all lacking in magical power) a place in his lair in exchange for their pledge to defend his home. Phyx also found that a community of deep gnomes lives nearby. He observed the gnomes displaying magical powers and immediately assumed them to be a group of hated mages. He has since begun picking the svirfneblin off one by one.

Phyx and his gray render friend have established a lair near a large mage college in a major city after being led there by a powerful demon who knows of Phyx and his potent abilities. They have begun preying on the students there, as well as any other spellcasters they stumble across. Authorities know that the assassinations are professionally done, but they're stumped as to the motives of the individuals involved. Ω

QUADRIPARTITE

BY PETER E. APERLO

ARTWORK BY TOM BAXA & MARK ZUG • CARTOGRAPHY BY CHRISTOPHER WEST

Magic Items Monsters NPCs Objects Settlements Traps

"Quadripartite" is a D&D adventure suitable for four 14th-level characters. This adventure is set in the World of Greyhawk, but it can be adapted easily for use in any setting. Consult the "Scaling the Adventure" sidebar for ways to modify the adventure for higher or lower levels of play. A cleric or paladin would be a good addition to a group playing through this adventure, and a character who can read Draconic would also be invaluable.

BACKGROUND

When Oerth was newly formed and the gods themselves were but young upstarts in the cosmos, certain powerful but alien intelligences sought dominion over this plane of existence. These elder entities, which existed in the timeless insanity of the Far Realms, sent their groping tentacles to the Material Plane in the form of monstrous minions—writhing, shapeless horrors that ravaged the primordial world, devouring the souls of the newly sentient, prehuman races. The cries of Oerth's inhabitants were heard by all the young deities, but three gods of neutrality—Pelor, Obad-Hai, and Nerull—were moved to action first. Although they knew that the Far Realms themselves exhibited no particular alignment tendencies, it was clear that the alien creatures native to those planes tended to foster madness elsewhere. Thus, the three gods feared that if the invaders were left unchecked for long, the Material Plane would descend into utter chaos. Conversely, if they allowed the monotonous gods of law to drive out the interlopers, those deities would gain too much power and tilt the balance the other way. Since the three neutral gods had not yet fixed on their separate moral paths, the enmities that would later arise among them had not crystallized. Thus, in a spirit of cooperation that they would never experience again, they entered into a pact to drive the invaders out. Kord immediately joined their cause because, although he was a champion of chaos himself, he could never resist a good fight.

The four young gods soon discovered that these minions of chaos, as they came to be known, were formidable foes. Their connection to the Far Realms made them extraordinarily resilient, and all their injuries healed quite readily. Even worse, every time one of these creatures struck a god, it drained some of his or her divine energy. Not only did this energy heal the creatures more quickly, but they could somehow channel it to their unfathomable masters, who used it to create new minions that would continue to spread their contagion across Oerth.

The four gods retreated to take counsel, hoping to find a way to fight the creatures without making them even stronger. Eventually, they determined that the only way to defeat the minions of chaos was to sever them entirely from the Far Realms and bind them to the Material Plane.

To that end, each god took small portions of his own essence and infused them into separate physical containers. When four such bits of divine essence—one from each god—were combined in a specially sanctified *cauldron of melding*, they formed an item known as a *primal anchor*. This item, when wielded by a mortal or divine champion, would sever the minions' links to the Far Realms and chain them to the Material Plane. Thus "anchored," they could not access the vast majority of their powers. Although still dangerous, the minions of chaos might then be defeated. And after a bloody conflict, defeated they were.

Millennia passed. The Lords of Outer Chaos, as the unfathomable masters of the minions had (perhaps erroneously) been called, retreated to the Far Realms once again. The *primal anchors* were broken up, and the bits of the gods' divine essence that had not been used in the conflict were lost in obscurity. The gods themselves turned their attention to other matters, eventually forgetting their earlier cooperation. Tales of the early mortals who had helped the gods in their war against the alien beasts were passed down, generation after generation, but the details were lost over time. Eventually the stories passed into legend and then, largely, into oblivion.

But not everyone forgot. A few notes in the margins of archaic tomes alluded to the ancient campaign, and a handful of diligent loremasters scattered across Oerth pieced together the truth. Realizing that the Lords of Outer Chaos might one day seek entry into this world again, they began to prepare for that eventuality. They established shrines to protect the few remaining *cauldrons of melding* and ensorcelled them with powerful spells that would enable heroes to retrieve the pieces needed to make a *primal anchor* when the time came.

Now it seems that time has arrived. Rhyll, a half-elf wizard and delver into things best left undisturbed, has called forth a minion of chaos from the Far Realms. Upon emerging from the Rushmoors, the creature began to blaze a trail of destruction in the direction of the town known as Shiboleth. This minion of chaos must be stopped before the town is destroyed and the Lords of Outer Chaos once again come forth to claim the land.

ADVENTURE SYNOPSIS

Tagus Grehan, a local priest of Nerull in the guise of a much older priest, approaches the PCs while they are in Shiboleth on other business. He warns them that a nearly unstoppable force—a minion of chaos—has been unleashed on the world, and that it is headed toward Shiboleth as they speak. He further explains that something called a *primal anchor* is needed to stop it, and that this device is connected in some way with a nearby shrine. He tried to open the shrine himself but was unsuccessful, so he requires their aid. Time is of the essence; the minion is but one day from the outer districts of the city.

Once the characters arrive at the shrine and figure out how to open it, they must decipher four Draconic inscriptions on the four-sided stone *cauldron of melding* inside. Each of the inscriptions is a riddle, the answer to which gives the characters access to one piece of the *primal anchor*. To bring forth the item, the PCs must place all four pieces—the *jewel of fire*, the *phylactery of darkness*, the *leviathan heart*, and the *wheel of Kord*—inside the *cauldron of melding*.

The characters must then find the minion of chaos and use the *primal anchor* to sever its connection to the Far Realms so that they can destroy it. Once they have done so, they can retrace the creature's path, find the obelisk where it first appeared, and confront its summoner. The party must also deal with Tagus, who tries to steal the *primal anchor* for his own purposes once the minion is dead.

ADVENTURE HOOKS

The PCs begin the adventure in the town of Shiboleth in the Kingdom of Gran March. If your campaign does not take place in the World of Greyhawk, any sizable city near a vast moor will do. You can choose from among the following hooks to get the PCs involved, or use them to inspire your own backstory.

- Phladris Renolle, an elf wizard/loremaster who is a friend or relative of one of the PCs, has disturbing news that he claims he must share in person. He asks the character to meet him at the Fountain of the Black Goat. Phladris doesn't show up at the appointed time because he has been taken prisoner by Tagus Grehan (see below).
- A PC cleric who worships Pelor, Obad-Hai, Kord, or Nerull is asked by his order to contact a cleric of Nerull named Tagus Grehan in Shiboleth.
- While passing through Shiboleth, the PCs receive an anonymous note (actually from Tagus) asking them to meet someone at the Fountain of the Black Goat.

A CONTACT IS MADE

The adventure begins when the PCs agree to a meeting with someone (even if it's not Tagus himself) at the Fountain of the Black Goat in Shiboleth.

The man is indeed Tagus Grehan, though he is not nearly as old as he seems. (See "The Truth About Tagus," below, if the characters attempt to see through his disguise. Tagus has cast *undetectable alignment* on himself already to keep paladins and other nosy characters from getting too nervous around him.) Assuming that the PCs allow Tagus to make himself comfortable, he thanks them and continues.

> It's well past noon and the appointed time for your meeting has come and gone. The fountain beside which the meeting was to occur is an ancient, sputtering, black basalt structure surmounted by a she-goat figure that seems oddly disturbing. Just as you are nearly ready to give up and leave, a cloaked man, leaning heavily on a staff, moves unsteadily toward you from one of the myriad alleys that feed into the nearly deserted square. As he approaches, you see that he is of advanced age, probably in his nineties.
>
> "Greetings," he says, "I am Tagus Grehan, a faithful servant of the King of All Gloom, and I have information of the gravest importance to us all. May I sit down and tell you about it? The Reaper will call me soon enough, but my legs may not be up for the journey," he says, laughing at his own little joke.
>
> "For some time now, strange events have been occurring in the lands around Shiboleth, especially to the west near the Rushmoors. Men, women, children, and livestock have gone missing, and peasants have heard chanting in an unknown tongue and spotted strange lights on the moors. Alarmed by the disappearances, the ignorant and fearful tried to lay the blame on me and my brethren. So we consulted the ancient texts of our temple in search of the truth. Our investigation revealed that in the distant past, this entire region was a center of worship for certain nameless beings from planes known only as the Far Realms. Our texts record that the servitors of these beings nearly overwhelmed all of Oerth before they were defeated by Great Nerull himself, with the aid of Pelor, Obad-Hai, and Kord. These four gods created devices called *primal anchors* that prevented the invaders, called minions of chaos, from fully invoking their native powers."
>
> The old man shifts in his seat and leans in closer. "You may think this talk of things long past to be the meanderings of an old man, but in fact the current threat is the same as the one the gods faced in that long-ago time. Somehow, one of those minions of chaos has been summoned anew—by whom, I know not—and it is headed for us at this very moment, as we sit here talking so cozily. If not stopped, it will level Shiboleth within a day or two.
>
> "You may well ask yourselves why I am telling you all this. Don't I serve He Who Revels in the Slaying of the Living? Shouldn't I be glad of the coming destruction? The explanation is very simple. This servant of chaos devours souls, and in so doing, it denies these souls to the Reaper. Worse still, as the beast feeds, the power of its alien masters increases. If they grow too strong, they will eventually be able to bridge the vast planar expanses and enter our world again. Such a catastrophic event would result in carnage beyond imagining.
>
> "I know that I cannot stop the creature alone; I have already tried and failed. In fact, I doubt any mortal could stop it alone in its current state. Our best option is to work together. Will you help me defeat the minion of chaos?"

If the PCs seem agreeable, Tagus continues with his proposal. If they have questions, he answers those first to the extent that he can. Adjust the information below accordingly.

> "Then I was not misled about your wisdom. A direct attack on the minion is sheer suicide. We need a weapon of the gods—the one our ancient texts call a primal anchor. Just outside the city is a stone shrine built long ago that is somehow related to this weapon. I know the location, but I have thus far been unable to open the shrine. I will show you where it lies if you meet me at the southern gate in half an hour."

Any character who objects to Tagus accompanying the party to the shrine can make an opposed Diplomacy check to try to change his mind. Success means he agrees to reveal the location without joining them, but he still urges them to hurry. Failure indicates that Tagus insists on personally guiding the characters to the site. If the PCs resort to threats, the cleric agrees to stay behind but tries to shadow them in secret (making Hide checks opposed by their Spot checks).

If the PCs seem undecided, Tagus reminds them that time is short, and that this monster was so destructive that the very gods felt it necessary to cooperate. Thus, mortals should have no compunctions about laying aside their differences to fight for the greater safety of all.

The black obelisk where Rhyll summoned the minion of chaos to this plane is 30 miles from town, and the creature has been traveling at approximately 1 mile per hour since then, tearing up the countryside as it goes. It has already been on the move for 10 hours at the time that Tagus contacts the PCs. Thus, they have roughly 20 hours in which to assemble the *primal anchor* and stop the creature.

THE TRUTH ABOUT TAGUS

Tagus is actually a limber, thirty-four-year-old man, not a doddering nonagenarian. Because of his clever use of the Disguise skill, coupled with an *alter self* spell that provides a +10 circumstance bonus on his Disguise checks, he appears to be quite frail and harmless.

In the event that his disguise is compromised, Tagus truthfully explains that he did not wish to appear dangerous because he was desperate to obtain the party's goodwill and aid. In fact, although Tagus is a thoroughly despicable character, most of what he says is true. The portion of his tale that is untrue concerns how he obtained his information about the minion, the Lords of Outer Chaos, and the *primal anchor*. He and his fellow clerics did not find the legend in ancient texts; Tagus himself discovered it by capturing and torturing Phladris Renolle, an elven wizard/loremaster who was on his way to open the shrine that houses the *cauldron of melding*. Phladris is currently being held in the dungeons below the Temple of Nerull in the center of the city. Tagus can't let him go, but he also can't allow the minion to run amok, for the reasons that he's stated. If questioned on those points Tagus has been vague about, he must make successful Bluff checks to convince suspicious characters.

Tagus is also interested in obtaining a *primal anchor* for another reason: He wants to use it against certain celestials that keep showing up to stop important sacrifices. The leadership of the local Temple of Nerull is away at the moment conferring with other brethren on this very matter. If Tagus can get the item and defeat the troublesome celestials himself, all the glory will be his, and he can advance his position in the temple hierarchy considerably. Tagus knows all the *primal anchor*'s powers (see the "*Primal Anchor*" sidebar), but he reveals only those that specifically affect minions of chaos.

SCALING THE ADVENTURE

This adventure is designed for four 14th-level PCs. You can also run it with smaller groups of higher-level or larger groups of lower-level characters. Or you can modify the adventure for groups of four higher- or lower-level PCs by following the general guidelines below.

12th- and 13th-level PCs: This adventure offers many opportunities for the PCs to rest and recuperate in the shrine between encounters, and there should be at least one opportunity to regain spells. More such opportunities can be introduced by increasing the time required for the minion to reach Shiboleth, and by including a few more curative potions in the treasures for the encounters. The encounters themselves can be adjusted as follows:

- Remove the fighter levels from the frost giants in area **4**.
- Remove two levels from Caedra in area **5**.
- Cut the number of followers Rhyll has in half.

It is not recommended that parties with an average level below 11 undertake this adventure. After all, the goal is to destroy a monster that gave even the gods trouble.

15th- and 16th-level PCs: With a few simple adjustments, the adventure can be made challenging enough for higher-level groups.

- Add another Large fire elemental to area **3**.
- Increase Kel Virond's level by two.
- Add two fighter levels to each of the frost giants in area **4**.
- Increase Caedra's level by two in area **5**.
- Add two assassin or cleric levels to Tagus.

17th- to 18th-level PCs: Add two more levels to each of the creatures listed above. Give the minion an energy drain attack that allows it to drain a single level with each tentacle rake, even when anchored by the *primal anchor*.

Remember that changing the Encounter Levels should raise or lower the amount of treasure in the adventure. Consult page 170 in the *Dungeon Master's Guide* (**Tables 7–2**, **7–3**, and **7–4**) to determine the treasure appropriate to the new encounters.

Creature (EL 14): Tagus Grehan began his career as a rogue, brutally waylaying travelers in back alleys and dark forest byways. More often than not, after relieving them of their gold, he simply left them for dead. But after some years, he grew to enjoy the killing more than the stealing, so he learned the subtle arts of assassination. Taking someone's life for a previously agreed-upon price turned out to be much more lucrative than trusting fate and the victim to provide funds. Only after an employer tried to avoid payment by having Tagus permanently silenced did he look for another vocation with better prospects for long-term health. He found his calling in the service of Nerull. Like any other true believer, he uses every bit of trickery, deception, and sharp steel at his disposal to get ahead in the temple hierarchy.

Tagus Grehan, Male Human Rog6/Asn4/Clr4 (Nerull): CR 14; Medium Humanoid (5 ft., 10 in. tall); HD 10d6+10 plus 4d8+4; hp 71; Init +8; Spd 30 ft.; AC 21, touch 17, flat-footed 21; BAB +10; Grap +10; Atk +17/+12 melee (1d6+2 plus poison/15–20, +2 *rapier*), or +11/+6 melee (1d4+1 plus poison/19–20, +1 *dagger*), or +15 ranged (1d4 plus poison/19–20, masterwork hand crossbow); SA death attack, rebuke undead 4/day, sneak attack +5d6, spells; SQ +2 save against poison, evasion, poison use, traps, uncanny dodge (Dex bonus to AC, can't be flanked); AL NE; SV Fort +8, Ref +14, Will +10; Str 11, Dex 18, Con 12, Int 14, Wis 16, Cha 13.

Skills: Balance +2, Bluff +14, Climb +2, Concentration +8, Decipher Script +5, Diplomacy +7, Disable Device +10, Disguise +18, Gather Information +11, Hide +17, Intimidate +9, Listen +10, Move Silently +17, Open Lock +10, Search +10, Sense Motive +9, Spot +10, Tumble +13, Use Magic Device +3. *Feats:* Exotic Weapon Proficiency (hand crossbow), Expertise, Improved Critical (rapier), Improved Initiative, Weapon Finesse (rapier), Weapon Focus (rapier).

Languages: Common, Elven, Infernal.

See the *Dungeon Master's Guide*, page 29, for assassin special attacks and qualities. Note that the Fortitude save for Tagus's death attack is DC 16.

Assassin Spells Prepared (2/2; base save DC=12 + spell level): 1st—*obscuring mist, spider climb;* 2nd—*alter self, undetectable alignment.*

Assassin Spellbook: 1st—*change self, detect poison, obscuring mist, spider climb;* 2nd—*alter self, darkness, undetectable alignment.*

Cleric Spells Prepared (5/5/4; base save DC=13 + spell level): 0—*detect magic, guidance, light, read magic, resistance;* 1st—*cure light wounds* ×2, *doom, entropic shield, protection from good**; 2nd—*bull's strength, cure moderate wounds, death knell, invisibility**.

*Domain spell. *Domains:* Evil (evil spells cast at +1 caster level), Trickery (Bluff, Disguise, and Hide are cleric class skills).

Possessions: +2 *leather armor,* +2 *rapier* (concealed in staff with poison-filled well), masterwork hand crossbow with 20 bolts (in case with poison-filled well), +1 *dagger* (in sheath with poison-filled well), three extra doses of deathblade poison (Fort DC 20, 1d6 Con/2d6 Con), +3 *ring of protection, ring of misdirection* (permanent *misdirection*—caster level 12th—centered on Tagus that functions as the spell; he can change the target of the *misdirection* at will), +1 *cloak of resistance,* 3 *potions of cure moderate wounds,* scroll of *hold person,* 137 gp, mithral-and-diamond ring (1,200 gp), silver holy symbol (30 gp), disguise kit, assassin spellbook.

Tactics: If Tagus accompanies the party, he makes every attempt to maintain his disguise as a feeble old man, fighting only if absolutely necessary. He relies primarily on spells and his dagger unless his life is seriously threatened.

Development: Tagus would rather go along to the shrine to ensure that the job is done properly, but if convinced of the party's competence, he's perfectly happy to let the PCs take care of forming the *primal anchor* and slaying the minion. Disposing of that creature is, after all, his first priority. Thereafter, he can simply snatch the item away.

Should the PCs kill Tagus or otherwise drive him away (he makes every effort not to get involved in a physical confrontation with the PCs), by the end of the day (6 hours later), refugees fleeing in the path of the minion begin arriving in town. The PCs should become aware of them easily and realize the cleric wasn't trying to mislead them. At that point, they can try to find the shrine and cauldron themselves based on the information from Tagus and a successful Gather Information or bardic knowledge check (DC 25), although they've now wasted a significant amount of the time that remained to them. Each check requires 1 hour.

IN SHIBOLETH

The party can purchase any item costing 500 gp or less in Shiboleth. More expensive items can be had, but not before the characters must leave to do battle with the minion.

Inquiring among the reticent populace using the Gather Information skill produces the following results to questions about specific topics.

- **DC 15:** Yes, I've heard of people going missing. Mostly country hicks and peasants. Probably just running away from their landlords and debts."
- **DC 15:** "People don't go into the Rushmoors anymore. Not sane people, anyway."
- **DC 20:** "Tagus Grehan? Oh, he's that new young priest at the Temple of Nerull. Vicious-looking, that one is."
- **DC 20:** "Phladris Renolle—he's that elf who spends so much time at the Collegium library. He's been in town a few months. He's always inquiring about the Rushmoors."
- **DC 25:** Shrine/*cauldron of melding*—"There's said to be some sort of ancient shrine south of here in the woods. No one knows what it's used for, or even where it is."

Additionally, if the PCs search their own memories using the Knowledge (arcana) or Knowledge (religion) skill, they may acquire other bits of knowledge.

- **DC 20:** A few neutral gods fought a war against powerful alien beings in the remote past.
- **DC 25:** A group of spellcasters guards against incursion by extraplanar forces and watches for signs of their approach. They

believe these forces have tried to invade in the past as well.

- DC 25: A *cauldron of melding* is a device used to forge weapons against invaders not of this plane. The shrines where these cauldrons are sealed against the impious and foolish.

Finally, successful bardic knowledge checks can provide the following clues.

- DC 25: Phladris Renolle is a member of a group of spellcasters who claim to be self-appointed guardians against an ancient evil of some sort.
- DC 25: A brutal highwayman named Tagus once regularly robbed and killed travelers on the borders of Keoland.
- DC 30: A *cauldron of melding* is a device used to forge special weapons against invaders not of this plane. The shrines that hold these items are sealed against the impious and foolish.

THE SHRINE

A successful Search or Wilderness Lore check (DC 9 for either) made at milestone 13 on the southern road leading out of the city reveals a faint path leading off into the woods. The path runs west through the trees for approximately 300 yards, then ends in a hollow strewn with very large boulders. The shrine is here, but it is difficult to discern (Search, DC 18) because of the overgrowth, the natural stones used in its construction, and a *permanent mirage arcana* spell that makes it appear to be part of the natural surroundings. If Tagus is with the party, he can point out the trail and shrine immediately.

> What had initially appeared as a large, moss-covered boulder partially hidden in the trees is now revealed to be a roughly rectilinear structure approximately 25 feet on a side. Four thick stone slabs support a massive stone roof covered with moss and vines.

Despite its primitive appearance, the shrine is solidly built and resistant to entry. It was purposely constructed this way to ensure that anyone who managed to enter would be powerful enough to actually retrieve the items needed to create the *primal anchor* and wield it against the minion. The PCs cannot gain access to the shrine through *teleport*, *passwall*, *dimension door*, or any other spell designed to circumvent obstacles, and the stones themselves are immune to cold and electricity damage, as well as to *disintegrate* and *transmute rock to mud*. They have been magically fortified to the strength of adamantine.

Magically Fortified Stone Wall: 8 in. thick; Hardness 20; hp 300; break DC 45.

A successful Search check (DC 15) on the southwest wall turns up an inscription in Draconic:

"Let the power of thy faith gain thee entry."

A successful Search check (DC 20) reveals a faint engraving near the inscription. It depicts a robed figure, holding forth a holy symbol with rays of light blazing from it. This image is a clue that the PCs should attempt a turn or rebuke undead check

PRIMAL ANCHOR

A *primal anchor* is intended for use against minions of chaos, and its primary function is to sever their links to the Far Realms and thus deny them some of their powers. To "anchor" a minion of chaos, a character must hit it with a ranged touch attack using the *primal anchor* as a thrown weapon (range increment 20 feet). If it hits, the creature's size is reduced by 1/3 (though it retains its original size category). It loses 10 Hit Dice, and the following adjustments are applied to its statistics: –12 Str, –6 Dex, –4 Con, –8 Int, –8 Wis, –14 Cha, –10 natural armor bonus, –10 SR. It loses its energy drain, frightful presence, and paralysis rays special attacks, as well as its protective aura and regeneration special qualities. Its DR drops to 10/+3, and its immunities are replaced by acid and electricity resistance 20. Its spell-like abilities are also decreased (see anchored statistics in area **6**). The minion's skills and feats are adjusted downward in accordance with the new statistics, as if it were an entirely new creature.

The *primal anchor* can affect other outsiders, as well. Striking any outsider other than a minion of chaos with the item produces an effect equivalent to that of a *blasphemy, dictum, holy word,* or *word of chaos* spell—whichever would do harm to the target. It also provides the benefits of any desired combination of the *cloak of chaos, holy aura, shield of law,* and *unholy aura* spells to whoever holds it.

The *primal anchor* vanishes after one week. The magic items that composed it are used up and permanently gone. To make a new *primal anchor,* it is necessary to find new items infused with the essences of the four gods Kord, Pelor, Obad-hai, and Nerull.

aimed at the door (a Knowledge—religion or Intelligence check, DC 15, also reveals this). A turn or rebuke check that would affect a 15-HD undead opens the shrine. When a PC makes such a check (a Use Magic Device or Disable Device check, DC 25, also suffices), read or paraphrase the following:

> An odd blue light bathes the structure as the ground begins to tremble. The stone facing you slowly recedes into the ground, revealing a square chamber beyond. Inside the 20-by-20-foot chamber is a square stone object whose four sides converge to form a lip around a round opening in the top.

The stone object is the *cauldron of melding*. If the PCs examine it further, continue with the following.

> Around the lip of the stone object runs an inscription in a strange language, and each of the four sides bears a similar inscription. Inside the opening is a swirling vortex of vapor, bright light, and impenetrable blackness.

Anyone staring into the cauldron for more than 1 minute must succeed at a Will save (DC 20) or be dazed for 1d4 minutes. The cauldron accepts only pieces of the *primal anchor*. Any other object or creature placed inside it is forcibly ejected after 1 round and takes 3d6 points of damage from slamming into the ceiling and walls of the shrine (Reflex, DC 18, for half).

An inscription around the rim of the cauldron reads as follows:

"When the four are made one, the masters will abandon the faceless minion."

More inscriptions on each of the four sides of the *cauldron* is a riddle whose answer refers to one of the items infused with the gods' essence. They can be solved in any order, but be sure to keep track of pssing time while the players confer about their answers.

When the answer to one of the riddles is uttered within the confines of the shrine (assume a PC has spoken aloud if the player has), all living creatures within the shrine are *teleported* to the location where that item is kept. A loud crack of thunder and a flash of brilliant light accompany this transport.

RIDDLE 1

The inscription on the west face of the *cauldron of melding* reads:

"You feed it, it lives.
You give it something to drink, it dies."

The answer is "fire." When that word is spoken, go to area **2**, "The Brass Tower."

RIDDLE 2

The inscription on the north face of the *cauldron of melding* reads:

"It cannot be seen, cannot be felt,
Cannot be heard, cannot be smelt.
It lies behind stars and under hills,
And all the empty holes it fills.
It comes first and follows after,
Ends life and kills laughter."

The answer is "darkness." Go to area **3**, "The Crypt of Kel Virond," when that word is spoken.

RIDDLE 3

The inscription on the east face of the *cauldron of melding* reads:

"I go around in circles,
But always straight ahead.
I never complain,
No matter where I am led."

The answer is "wheel." Speaking that word transfers the party to area **4**, "The Slate Tundra."

BREAK IT DOWN

"Quadripartite" possesses a unique format that makes it extremely flexible and useful, even if you're not interested in using the module as a whole. Composed of four (or five, if you include the final encounters) unique, very different mini-quests, "Quadripartite" can easily be separated into its component parts if you're looking for interesting individual encounters for your campaign.

Want a fun ice encounter? Use "Slate Tundra." Need a good undead challenge for your party? Check out "The Crypt of Kel Virond." Taken together, the pieces of "Quadripartite" will tax your party's strategic resources to their maximum. But even individually, the mini-quests make for excellent short adventures, or as the premise for entirely new adventures of your own design. The utility of these encounters is limited only by your own creativity.

RIDDLE 4

The inscription on the south face of the cauldron reads:

"Alive without breath,
As cold as death,
Never thirsty, ever drinking,
Clad in mail, never clinking."

The answer is "fish." As soon as a PC speaks that word, go to area **5**, "Out to Sea."

CREATING THE PRIMAL ANCHOR

When all four pieces of the anchor—the *jewel of fire*, the *phylactery of darkness*, the *wheel of Kord*, and the *leviathan heart*—are placed into the *cauldron of melding*, it fuses them into a *primal anchor*.

> An iridescent bolt of energy bursts from the *cauldron of melding*, blowing the roof off the shrine and projecting skyward. Just above the cauldron, floating in the energy beam, is a metal sphere about the size of an ostrich egg that pulses red and black. On its surface are blue letters in the same script as the inscriptions on the cauldron.

The inscription is in Draconic, and it reads:

"Hurl me true. Be not faint of heart."

The sphere is the *primal anchor*. It is cool to the touch and can be plucked from the beam of energy by any character.

As soon as the PCs leave the shrine with the *primal anchor*, the walls seal up again and the roof reforms. It remains this way until the *cauldron of melding* is needed once again—if another minion of chaos appears on the Prime Material Plane. When that occurs, new riddles leading to the four parts of a new anchor appear on the stone faces of the cauldron, and the cycle continues.

THE BRASS TOWER

An efreeti named Hu'shurish has set up a dominion of his own in the desert wastes beyond the Sea of Dust. In ages past, the natives worshiped the creature as a god and constructed a tower of brass at his command. Long ago, the civilization that built the tower fell. The people who once paid homage to the genie left the area, their city slowly crumbled, and the desert swallowed all traces of their civilization. Attended by his faithful magmins, the efreeti remains. These creatures scour the world for precious metals and gems, which they bring to their master so he can create molten masterpieces of art—Hu'shurish's only diversion now. The efreeti's most prized possession is the *jewel of fire*—an item stolen long ago from a Temple of Pelor in Greyhawk and a component of the *primal anchor*.

A clan of firenewts from a nearby chain of volcanic mountains discovered the efreeti's brass tower hundreds of years ago, and like the populace of the lost desert civilization, these creatures came to revere the genie as a deity. The clan's high priest and his entourage make a pilgrimage to the tower once a year to bring Hu'shurish precious metals and jewels and ask for his wisdom in return. The high priest is currently within the tower, communing with the elemental. When the PCs appear before the tower, read the following:

> A brilliantly shining brass tower surmounted by an onion-shaped dome rises from the sands of a burning desert. Waves of heat cause the tower's image to dance and shimmer, but the structure is clearly more than 100 feet tall. In front of it is a small encampment within which a dozen or so reptilian creatures go about their business. Several of these creatures are mounted on tall, two-legged beasts.

2A. THE FIRENEWT ENCAMPMENT (EL 13)

Human desert raiders frequently prowl these wastes, so a contingent of heavily armed firenewt barbarians has accompanied the high priest on his pilgrimage to ensure his safety. Captain Frarch and his troops do not like the desert here at all. They would rather go where the hunting is better and the weather is even warmer.

Creatures: Captain Frarch and his three sergeants are mounted on giant striders. The high priest's giant strider is tethered inside the perimeter of the encampment. The remaining dozen firenewts go on foot and are armed with longspears and battleaxes. Note that firenewts and giant striders originally appeared in *Monster Compendium: Monsters of Faerûn*.

Captain Frarch, Firenewt Bbn10: CR 11; Medium Monstrous Humanoid (fire, reptilian); HD 2d8+2 plus 10d12+10; hp 98; Init +1; Spd 30 ft., mounted 40 ft.; AC 19, touch 12, flat-footed 19; BAB +12; Grap +13; Atk +15/+10/+5 melee (1d12+4/×3, +1 *greataxe*), or +15/+10/+5 melee (1d8+3/×3, masterwork heavy lance); SA breath weapon (fire); SQ darkvision 60 ft., fast movement, fire subtype, rage 3/day, uncanny dodge (Dex bonus to AC, can't be flanked, +1 against traps); AL NE; SV Fort +9, Ref +7, Will +6; Str 15, Dex 13, Con 14, Int 9, Wis 10, Cha 8.

Skills: Handle Animal +5, Intimidate +12, Listen +12, Ride (giant strider) +14, Spot +6. *Feats:* Mounted Combat, Power Attack, Ride-By Attack, Spirited Charge, Trample.

See "Firenewt Regulars" below, for firenewt special attacks and qualities. Note that the Reflex save DC for Captain Frarch's breath weapon is 13.

Rage: While Captain Frarch rages, his statistics change as follows: HD 2d8+8 plus 10d12+40; hp 122; AC 17, touch 10, flat-footed 17; Atk +17/+12/+7 melee (1d12+7/×3, +1 *greataxe*), or +16/+11/+6 melee (1d8+6/×3, heavy lance); SV Fort +11, Will +8; Str 19, Con 18; breath weapon save DC 15. Frarch's rage lasts for 7 rounds.

Possessions: +2 *breastplate*, +1 *greataxe*, *ring of protection* +1, masterwork heavy lance, jade pectoral (170 gp), 45 gp.

Sergeants, Male Firenewt Bbn7 (3): CR 8; Medium Monstrous Humanoid (fire, reptilian); HD 2d8+2 plus 7d12+7; hp 63; Init +1; Spd 30 ft., mounted 40 ft.; AC 16, touch 11, flat-footed 16;

BAB +9; Grap +11; Atk +11/+6 melee (1d12+3/×3, greataxe), or +11/+6 melee (1d8+3/×3, heavy lance); SA breath weapon (fire); SQ darkvision 60 ft., fast movement, fire subtype, rage 2/day, uncanny dodge (Dex bonus to AC, can't be flanked); AL NE; SV Fort +6, Ref +6, Will +5; Str 14, Dex 13, Con 13, Int 7, Wis 10, Cha 8.

Skills: Intimidate +6, Listen +8, Ride (giant strider) +10, Spot +5. *Feats:* Mounted Combat, Power Attack, Ride-By Attack, Spirited Charge.

See "Firenewt Regulars," below, for firenewt special attacks and qualities. Note that the Reflex save DC for a sergeant's breath weapon is 12.

Rage: While a sergeant rages, his statistics change as follows: HD 2d8+6 plus 7d12+21; hp 81; AC 14, touch 9, flat-footed 14; Atk +13/+8 melee (1d12+6/×3, greataxe), or +13/+8 melee (1d8+4/×3, heavy lance); SV Fort +8, Will +7; Str 18, Con 17; breath weapon save DC 14. The sergeants' rage lasts for 6 rounds.

Possessions: Chainmail, greataxe, heavy lance, 4d6 gp.

Firenewt Regulars, Male Firenewt Bbn5 (8): CR 6; Medium Monstrous Humanoid (fire, reptilian); HD 2d8+2 plus 5d12+5; hp 36; Init +1; Spd 30 ft.; AC 16, touch 11, flat-footed 16; BAB +7, Grap +8; Atk +8/+3 melee (1d8+1/19–20, longsword); SA breath weapon (fire); SQ darkvision 60 ft., fast movement, fire subtype, rage 2/day, uncanny dodge (Dex bonus to AC, can't be flanked); AL N; SV Fort +5, Ref +5, Will +4; Str 13, Dex 13, Con 13, Int 7, Wis 10, Cha 8.

Skills: Intimidate +6, Listen +6, Ride (giant strider) +8, Spot +5. *Feats:* Dodge, Mounted Combat, Power Attack.

Rage: While a regular rages, his statistics change as follows: HD 2d8+6 plus 5d12+15; hp 50; AC 14, touch 9, flat-footed 14; Atk +10/+5 melee (1d8+4/19–20, longsword); SV Fort +7, Will +6; Str 16, Con 17; breath weapon save DC 14. The regulars' rage lasts for 6 rounds.

Breath Weapon (Su): Once every 10 minutes, a firenewt can breathe fire at a single opponent, dealing 1d6 points of fire damage (Reflex, DC 12, for half).

Fire Subtype (Ex): A firenewt is immune to fire damage, but it takes double damage from cold unless a saving throw for half damage is allowed. In that case, it takes half damage on a success and double damage on a failure.

Possessions: Chainmail, longsword.

Giant Striders (4): CR 1; Large Magical Beast (fire); HD 2d10+6; hp 17; Init +1; Spd 40 ft.; AC 16, touch 10, flat-footed 15; BAB +2; Grap +10; Atk +5 melee (1d8+4, kick), or +5 melee (1d8+4, bite); Face/Reach 5 ft. by 10 ft./5 ft.; SA fireball; SQ darkvision 60 ft., fire subtype, healing from fire, low-light vision, resistant to magic; AL N; SV Fort +6, Ref +4, Will –1; Str 18, Dex 12, Con 17, Int 1, Wis 9, Cha 8.

Skills: Listen +1. *Feats:* Run.

Fireball (Su): Twice per hour, a giant strider can emit a small fireball from ducts near its eyes. Each fireball has a range of 60 feet and a burst radius of 10 feet. Any creature caught in the blast takes 1d6 points of fire damage (DC 14 avoids).

Fire Subtype (Ex): A firenewt is immune to fire damage, but it takes double damage from cold unless a saving throw for half damage is allowed. In that case, it takes half damage on a success and double damage on a failure.

Healing from Fire (Ex): Once per 3 rounds that a strider is exposed to intense heat or flame, the creature gains the benefit of a *cure light wounds* spell. A *fireball* spell or other fiery attack fully heals the creature instantly.

Resistant to Magic (Ex): A giant strider gains a +2 bonus on all saving throws against magical effects.

Tactics: Captain Frarch and his sergeants immediately charge any intruders. They rely on the speed of their mounts and their ability to dash in, attack, and dash away. The firenewts on foot attempt to flank opponents by forming two spear phalanxes consisting of four firenewts each. None of the firenewts are interested in parleying with the PCs; they simply assume that all such beings are raiders trying to trick them.

Treasure: Inside the captain's tent are 210 pp and 530 gp (Search, DC 15). Buried in the sand under a cushion in the high priest's tent (Search, DC 20) is a small sandalwood box (worth 50 gp) containing three blocks of *incense of meditation*.

Development: Once they have dealt with the firenewts, the PCs can look for a way into the tower. If the characters have not entered the tower within 10 minutes of their arrival, the high priest Trel'Shenash completes his business and exits the tower (see area **2b** for Trel'Shenash's complete statistics).

Ad-hoc XP Award: Although the giant striders are too low CR for PCs of this level to gain experience, they certainly make the mounted firenewts much more formidable. Treat each mounted firenewt (Captain Frarch and the three sergeants) as one CR higher than listed for the purpose of awarding experience if they remain on their mounts for more than 1 round.

2B. THE OUTER RING (EL 11)

The solid brass double doors are 15 feet high and hot to the touch, but not damagingly so. When the doors are open, continue with the following.

A blast of heated air hits you in the face like a blanket. The walls inside the tower are made of brass and covered with depictions of flamelike creatures leaping to and fro.

Closer examination of the wall relief reveals small human figures making offerings and constructing buildings. They are obviously fearful of the flame creatures and act at their bidding.

This entire outer area is as hot as an oven. Characters without magical protection are subject to the effects of extreme heat (see the *Dungeon Master's Guide*, page 86).

Creatures: Each "X" on the map represents a magmin. These creatures know that the PCs are not supposed to be inside the efreeti's tower, so they try to stop any intruders they notice. Prolonged sounds of combat draw Trel'Shenash to investigate.

The ladder up to the audience platform is 30 feet high and requires a successful Climb check (DC 15) to negotiate due to the heat. A PC attempting to climb without magical protection from the heat takes 1d4 points of fire damage per round.

Magmins (6): hp 13 each; *Monster Manual* 130. Note that 14th-level PCs won't normally receive experience for defeating the low-CR magmins.

Trel'Shenash, Male Firenewt Clr10: CR 11; Medium Monstrous Humanoid (fire, reptilian); HD 2d8+4 plus 10d8+20; hp 78; Init +1; Spd 20 ft.; AC 17, touch 11, flat-footed 16; BAB +9; Grap +10; Atk +12/+7 melee (1d8+3/×3, +2 *battleaxe*); SA breath weapon (fire), rebuke undead 4/day, spells; SQ darkvision 60 ft., fire subtype; AL NE; SV Fort +9, Ref +7, Will +14; Str 12, Dex 13, Con 14, Int 12, Wis 18, Cha 13.

Skills: Concentration +13, Diplomacy +5, Intimidate +7, Listen +9, Ride (giant strider) +10, Scry +6, Spot +10. *Feats:* Brew Potion, Craft Magic Arms and Armor, Mounted Combat, Ride-By Attack, Silent Spell, Spell Focus (Evocation).

See "Firenewt Regulars," above, for firenewt special attacks and qualities. Note that the Reflex save DC for Trel'Shanesh's breath weapon is 12.

Cleric Spells Prepared (6/6/6/5/5/3; base save DC = 14 + spell level): 0—*detect magic, guidance, light, purify food and drink, resistance* ×2; 1st—*bane, burning hands**, cause fear, cure light wounds, divine favor, obscuring mist*; 2nd—*bull's strength, cure moderate wounds, endurance, hold person, produce flame**†, *silence*; 3rd—*bestow curse, contagion**, *cure serious wounds, dispel magic, prayer*; 4th—*cure critical wounds, divine power, greater magic weapon, sending, wall of fire**†; 5th—*fire shield**†, *flame strike*†, *summon monster* V.

*Domain spell. *Domains:* Destruction (smite 1/day, +4 on attack and +10 on damage), Fire (turn water/rebuke fire 4/day).

†Evocation spell; base save DC = 16 + spell level.

Possessions: +1 chainmail, +2 battleaxe, silver unholy symbol (30 gp), 2 *potions of cure critical wounds,* pouch holding 2 golden yellow topaz (500 gp each), 3 tourmalines (100 gp each), 4 pink pearls (100 gp each), and 8 smoky quartz (50 gp each).

Tactics: The closest magmins engage the party, doing their best to avoid prolonged close combat. The other magmins arrive to investigate the noise after 3 rounds. After another 2 rounds, Trel'Shenash descends from the audience platform (area **2c**) to find out what's causing the disturbance. If he sees intruders, he casts *greater magic weapon, bull's strength, endurance, fire shield,* and *divine power* on himself, then *prayer*. He proceeds to cast *silence* on any spellcasters, then *flame strike, hold person,* and his other offensive spells. Otherwise, he returns to the audience platform.

Development: Once the PCs have dealt with the magmins (and the high priest, if he appears), they can make their way to the center of the tower.

2c. Tower Center (EL varies)

Within the core of the tower, PCs without magical protection are subject to abysmal heat (see the *Dungeon Master's Guide* page 86). The audience platform extends into the center of the tower's inner core, 40 feet above the floor where the efreeti lives and creates its works of art. The surface of the platform and the thin bridge leading to it are slick from millennia of use. Any character who engages in violent motion (such as combat) in any spot except the very center of the audience platform must make a successful Reflex save (DC 15) each round or slip and plunge to the floor below, taking 4d6 points of damage and 4d6 points of fire damage from the molten metal.

If the PCs have fought the magmins, Hu'shurish is well aware that intruders have invaded his home. If the high priest has already been dispatched by the time the PCs arrive, introduce the efreeti as follows:

Above you rises the vast vault of the dome. It holds no windows, and the heat in this place is unbearable. A skinny brass bridge juts out into space, giving access to a circular platform. Some 40 or 50 feet below you, standing on a swirling pattern of molten metal and sparkling gems in the floor, is a 13-foot tall, red-skinned figure holding a massive brass falchion, sporting a long, black topknot, and wearing a great deal of jewelry along with billowing pants and shoes. He draws himself up to his full height, and his two flashing, fiery eyes regard you with disdain and growing fury.

If the high priest did not descend from the audience platform earlier, he is still here. In this case, add Trel'Shenash to the description above.

Creatures (EL 11 or 13): The efreeti in the center of the tower fancies himself an artist of sorts. He constantly creates fantastic mosaics and sculptures from the gems and precious metals on the floor and walls of his abode.

Hu'shurish, Male Efreeti Exp2/Bbn3: CR 13; Large Outsider (evil, fire, lawful) (13 ft. tall); HD 10d8+20 plus 2d6+4 plus 3d12+6; hp 111; Init +7; Spd 30 ft., fly 50 ft. (perfect); AC 26, touch 12, flat-footed 26; BAB +14; Grap +20; Atk +21/+16/+11 (2d6+11 plus 1d6 fire/15–20, Huge +2 *flaming falchion*) or +19/+14/+9 (1d8+9 plus 1d6 fire, slam); Reach 10 feet; SA heat, rage 1/day, spell-like abilities; SQ fast movement, fire subtype, plane shift, telepathy, uncanny doge (Dex bonus to AC); AL LE; SV Fort +12, Ref +11, Will +13; Str 23, Dex 17, Con 14, Int 12, Wis 15, Cha 15.

Skills: Appraise +5, Bluff +12, Concentration +16, Craft (gem-

cutting) +10, Craft (sculpting) +10, Escape Artist +13, Intimidate +15, Listen +15, Move Silently +13, Sense Motive +11, Spellcraft +11, Spot +12. *Feats:* Combat Casting, Combat Reflexes, Dodge, Improved Critical (falchion), Improved Initiative, Power Attack.

Rage: While Hu'shurish rages, his statistics change as follows: HD 10d8+40 plus 2d6+8 plus 3d12+12; hp 141; AC 24, touch 10, flat-footed 24; Atk +23/+18/+13 (2d6+14 plus 1d6 fire/15–20, Huge +2 *flaming falchion*) or +21/+16/+9 melee (1d8+11 plus 1d6 fire, slam); SV Fort +14, Will +15; Str 27, Con 18. Hu'shurish's rage lasts for 7 rounds.

Heat (Ex): An efreeti's red-hot body deals 1d6 points of additional fire damage whenever it hits in melee, or when grappling each round it maintains a hold.

Fire Subtype (Ex): An efreeti is immune to fire damage, but it takes double damage from cold unless a saving throw for half damage is allowed. In that case, it takes half damage on a success and double damage on a failure.

Spell-like Abilities: At will—*produce flame* and *pyrotechnics*; 1/day grant up to three *wishes* (to nongenies only), *detect magic, enlarge, gaseous form, invisibility, permanent image, polymorph self,* and *wall of fire*. Caster level 18th; save DC = 12 + spell level.

Possessions: Large +2 *chain shirt,* Huge +2 *flaming falchion, ring of force shield,* fire-proof belt pouch holding 1 blue diamond (5,000 gp), 3 amethysts (100 gp each), 2 bloodstones (50 gp each), and 74 gp.

Tactics: The *jewel of fire* containing Pelor's essence is Hu'shurish's most prized possession—one he is willing to defend to the death. Knowing his vulnerability to cold-based spells, the efreeti attacks spellcasters first, depending on the ambient heat to tire out heavily armored foes. He activates his *wall of fire* spell-like ability to block the entrance to the chamber and turns invisible before engaging in melee. If present, Trel'Shenash tries to protect himself with a *wall of fire* before fortifying himself with defensive magic. He then uses *hold person, flame strike,* and other offensive spells against the PCs. If necessary, he enters melee once he runs out of useful spells. Meanwhile, any surviving magmins rush to their lord's aid (1d4 arrive per round until all are accounted for). They attempt to aid each other in grapple checks against PCs near the edge of the platform then push them off onto the molten metal floor below (4d6 points of falling damage plus 4d6 points of fire damage).

Treasure: Set in the floor, at the center of a swirl of gems and molten precious metals, is the *jewel of fire*. Whichever character guessed "fire" as the answer to riddle 1 sees the jewel surrounded by an unearthly blue glow. A successful bardic knowledge or Knowledge (religion) check (DC 25) allows any other character to recognize the jewel as an object sacred to Pelor. The jewel is the size of an anvil and as hot as a raging fire. Anyone grasping it takes 1d6 points of fire damage per round. An evil being who touches the jewel takes 1d6 additional points of damage per round.

In addition to the jewel, the PCs can pick up 5d10×10 gp worth of precious metals and gems per round from the tower floor. However, this semi-molten treasure deals 1d4 points of fire damage per round for 2d8 rounds to whomever holds it.

Development: As soon as a character grasps the *jewel of fire,* the entire party is transported back to the *cauldron of melding.*

THE CRYPT OF KEL VIROND

Half a millennium ago, Kel Virond was a high-ranking priest of Nerull whose cruelty and sadism were infamous in the lands around Ulek. He sacrificed thousands of innocent people to his dark lord before his fortress outside Havenhill was besieged by paladins of Heironeous.

As his defenses collapsed, Kel Virond retreated to the lower levels of his keep to beg his master for aid. Nerull rewarded his faithful servant with undeath. Kel Virond received a bit of the god's essence in the form of a *phylactery of darkness,* which immediately fused itself to his forehead and transformed him into a lich. The paladins razed the fortress but could not defeat the newly born lich. So they sealed off the exits and consecrated the ground, hoping to keep him trapped. Thus, the tomb Kel Virond had built for himself became his prison. He now awaits someone to set him free.

3A. BLOCKED PASSAGE

A spiral staircase once gave access to the keep above. Now both the staircase and 20 feet of the southern end of this passage are choked off with rubble from the destruction of the keep. If the characters do not have a light source when they arrive here, read the following aloud.

> Wherever you are, it's as black as pitch. The air is stale, dank, and heavy with the scent of mold.

When light becomes available, continue as follows.

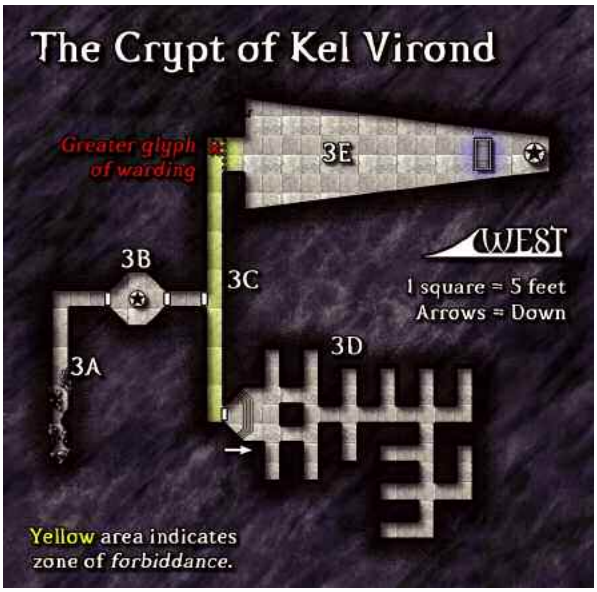
> The vaulted ceilings are only about 7 feet high in the corridor in which you stand. The walls of the corridor are built of close-fitted black stone, slick with algae and fungus. One end of the passage is blocked by rubble.

3B. ANTECHAMBER (EL 11)

The followers of Heironeous placed a stone golem with two faces here to prevent Kel Virond from leaving, and to keep any would-be allies of the lich out. They also whitewashed the walls to cover up the unholy blasphemies that had been painted upon them.

> The walls of this octagonal chamber are white, but the mold has eaten away the paint in many places, revealing black stone behind. In the center of the room stands a 9-foot-tall marble statue of a bald, heavily muscled man. He wears a toga and holds his arms straight down at his sides. The statue turns its head toward you, then walks backward to block the door on the far side of the room with its body.

Creature: Emblazoned on the golem's chest is a gauntlet clutching a lightning bolt. A successful Knowledge (religion)



check (DC 10) identifies this image as the holy symbol of Heironeous. The stone golem attacks any undead creatures that enter the room, as well as anyone who attempts to pass without invoking the name of Heironeous. Doing so causes the golem to resume its post in the center of the chamber, allowing the PCs to pass unmolested.

Stone Golem (1): hp 77; *Monster Manual* 108.

Tactics: The stone golem attacks any PCs who try to pass with its great marble fists.

Development: Once the PCs defeat the golem, they can proceed farther into the crypt.

Ad-hoc XP Award: If the PCs bypass the golem without fighting it, award them experience as if they had defeated it in combat.

3C. FORBIDDEN CORRIDOR (EL VARIES)

The faithful of Heironeous also warded this corridor to prevent Kel Virond from escaping. The entire passage is affected by a *forbiddance* spell (caster level 13th). Any creature that is not lawful good must succeed at a Will save (DC 22) or be hedged out and damaged as per the spell description (see the *Player's Handbook*, page 206).

To get through this corridor, the PCs must deal with the ghost that inhabits it and find a way through the heavy iron portcullis.

Creature (EL 11): One of those slain during the assault on the crypt five centuries ago was Adelros Melremen, a paladin of Heironeous. Now a ghost, he appears as a knight in full plate armor and shield, wielding a sword. His spirit can never rest until either his bones (currently lying broken and gnawed in area **3d**) are given a proper burial in hallowed ground or Kel Virond is destroyed.

Adelros Melremen, Human Ghost Pal9 (against ethereal opponents): CR 11; Medium Undead; HD 9d12; hp 58; Init +4; Spd 20 ft.; AC 22, touch 10, flat-footed 22; BAB +9; Grap +12; Atk +14/+9 melee (1d10+5/19–20, +2 *bastard sword*); SA frightful moan, malevolence, smite evil (1/day, +3 on attacks and +9 on damage), spells, turn undead 6/day; SQ aura of courage, *detect evil*, divine grace, divine health, *lay on hands* (27 hp/day), manifestation, rejuvenation, *remove disease* 3/week, turn resistance +4, undead traits; AL LG; SV Fort +9, Ref +6, Will +8; Str 17, Dex 10, Con —, Int 12, Wis 15, Cha 17.

Skills: Concentration +12, Diplomacy +12, Handle Animal +12, Heal +11, Hide +2, Knowledge (religion) +4, Listen +10, Ride (horse) +11, Search +9, Spot +10. *Feats:* Exotic Weapon Proficiency (bastard sword), Improved Initiative, Mounted Combat, Ride-By Attack, Spirited Charge.

See *Monster Manual* page 212 for ghost special attacks and qualities. Note that the save DC is 17 for Adelros's frightful moan and malevolence abilities.

Paladin Spells Prepared (2/1; base save DC=12 + spell level): 1st—*bless weapon, divine favor*; 2nd—*shield other.*

Adelros Melremen, Human Ghost Pal9 (manifested; against material opponents): CR 11; Medium Undead (incorporeal); HD 9d12; hp 58; Init +4; Spd fly 30 ft. (perfect); AC 25, touch 13, flat-footed 25; BAB +9; Grap +9; Atk +11/+6 melee (1d10+2/19–20, +2 *bastard sword*); SA frightful moan, malevolence, smite evil (1/day, +3 on attacks and +9 on damage), spells, turn undead 6/day; SQ aura of courage, *detect evil*, divine grace, divine health, *lay on hands* (27 hp/day), rejuvenation, *remove disease* 3/week, turn resistance +4, undead traits; SV Fort +9, Ref +6, Will +8; Str —, Dex 10, Con —, Int 12, Wis 15, Cha 17.

Skills: Concentration +12, Diplomacy +12, Handle Animal +12, Heal +11, Hide +2, Knowledge (religion) +4, Listen +10, Ride (horse) +11, Search +9, Spot +10. *Feats:* Exotic Weapon Proficiency (bastard sword), Improved Initiative, Mounted Combat, Ride-By Attack, Spirited Charge.

Paladin Spells Prepared (2/1; base save DC=12 + spell level): 1st—*bless weapon, divine favor*; 2nd—*shield other.*

Tactics: Adelros is committed to preventing the lich's escape, but he does not wish to destroy innocent creatures in the process. However, he cannot speak unless he takes over a living body. Thus, he first attempts to scare the PCs away from the portcullis using his frightful moan. If that tactic fails, he attempts to use his malevolence ability against a PC, so that he can verbally warn the group of what lies ahead. If the PCs can convince him (with a successful Diplomacy check) that their mission involves a greater good, he allows them to pass. If they mention that they seek a unique item of power, he also tells them that it may be the lich's phylactery. Adelros attacks only as a last resort, and then only to subdue unless his opponent is evil.

Development: If the PCs manage to open the crypt and confront the lich, Adelros uses every means in his power to aid them, if he is still present.

Portcullis: 2 in. thick; Hardness 10; hp 60; break DC 25; Strength, DC 25, to lift.

Note: The bars on the heavy iron portcullis are covered with sharp spikes that deal 1d4 points of damage to any PC who tries to break them or lift the portcullis. The portcullis can be raised using the winches and chains on both sides of it, but the winch

outside the crypt is locked (Open Lock, DC 25) and trapped with a *greater glyph of warding* (see **Trap**, below).

Trap (EL 7): The floor and walls around the outer winch are protected by a *greater glyph of warding.*

***Greater Glyph of Warding* (Blast):** CR 7; spell; spell trigger; no reset; spell effect (*greater glyph of warding* [blast], 11th-level cleric, Reflex save, DC 22, half damage, 6d8 sonic); Search (DC 31), Disable Device (DC 31).

3D. THE LESSER CRYPTS (EL 13)

The door to this area is spiked shut from the outside. Prying it open requires a successful Strength check (DC 15) and 1d6+1 minutes.

Kel Virond's deceased acolytes and servants populate this labyrinthine charnel house. He delighted in transforming them into various kinds of undead and keeping them locked down here. He would occasionally toss a live sacrifice into the crypt and laugh as the ravenous undead ripped the hapless victim to pieces.

Creatures: During the long centuries of Kel Virond's captivity, the undead in this chamber received no food at all, so they began to feed on each other. The lesser undead (zombies and ghouls) were eventually devoured by the greater ones (spectres and mohrgs). Now, with even that source of sustenance gone, the hunger of these miserable creatures is unimaginable.

Spectres (5): hp 45 each; *Monster Manual* 169.

Mohrgs (3): hp 26 each; *Monster Manual* 137.

Tactics: The spectres and mohrgs in this chamber attack any creature that opens the door. They use no care or strategy other than to overpower their foes as quickly as possible.

Treasure: The mortal remains of Adelros the paladin are scattered about this chamber, but finding them requires 30 minutes and a successful Search check (DC 20). His *+1 full plate armor*, *+1 large shield*, and *+2 bastard sword* are also hidden in the refuse of the ages (Search, DC 20, for each). Nothing else of value lies here, since Kel Virond stripped any treasure from the corpses of sacrifices before tossing them to the undead.

Development: Once the PCs overcome the undead in this chamber, they can continue toward Kel Virond's resting place.

3E. THE SARCOPHAGUS AND ALTAR (EL 14)

Beyond the portcullis is the room that Kel Virond built to serve as his tomb when the time of his death arrived. At the far end of the chamber is an altar dedicated to Nerull. In front of it stands a sarcophagus whose top is carved with ornate latticework that conceals a number of peepholes through which the lich can watch the crypt.

> The ceiling in this chamber is perhaps 30 feet high and features gothic-style vaulting. A 15-foot-tall statue of a skeletal figure in hooded black robes and wielding a scythe dominates this chamber. Carvings of similar skeletal figures frolicking or dancing with humans and halflings adorn the walls. In front of the statue is an intricately carved, rectangular stone block—perhaps an altar or a sarcophagus.

When the PCs enter the chamber, Kel Virond casts his preparatory spells (see **Tactics**, below) before making his appearance.

> The lid of the sarcophagus slides off and shatters on the stone floor. A warrior in chainmail wearing a full helm leaps out and charges, swinging a gleaming black scythe. Only when he's about to strike does it become obvious that his hands are mere bones!

Creature: Although he is frustrated beyond human imagination by his 500-year imprisonment, Kel Virond understands that these mortal intruders are worth more to him alive than dead, because they just might be able to free him.

Kel Virond, Male Human Lich Clr12 (Nerull): CR 14; Medium Undead (6 ft. 2 in. tall); HD 12d12; hp 78; Init +2; Spd 20 ft.; AC 25, touch 12, flat-footed 23; BAB +9; Grap +12; Atk +12 melee touch (1d8+5, touch), or +15/+10 melee (2d4+6 plus 2d6 unholy/19–20/×4, *+2 keen unholy scythe*); SA damaging touch, fear aura, paralyzing touch, rebuke undead 5/day, spells; SQ DR 15/+1, immunities (cold, electricity, mind-affecting attacks, polymorphing), turn resistance +4, undead traits; AL NE; SV Fort +8, Ref +6, Will +12; Str 16, Dex 14, Con —, Int 12, Wis 19, Cha 14.

Skills: Bluff +4, Concentration +12, Diplomacy +10, Hide +6, Knowledge (religion) +10, Listen +13, Move Silently +6, Search +9, Sense Motive +11, Spellcraft +11, Spot +11. *Feats:* Combat Casting, Craft Wondrous Item, Martial Weapon Proficiency (scythe), Scribe Scroll, Still Spell, Weapon Focus (scythe).

Cleric Spells Prepared (6/7/6/6/5/4/3; base save DC = 14 + spell level): 0—*detect magic* ×2, *guidance* ×2, *read magic, resistance;* 1st—*command, curse water, deathwatch, detect good, divine favor, magic weapon , protection from good**; 2nd—*bull's strength, darkness, death knell**, *enthrall, hold person, spiritual weapon;* 3rd—*animate dead**, *bestow curse, blindness/deafness, contagion, dispel magic, protection from elements;* 4th—still *dispel magic, divine power, poison, spell immunity, unholy blight**; 5th—*dispel good**, *slay living, spell resistance, summon monster V;* 6th—*blade barrier, create undead**, *harm.*

*Domain spell. *Domains:* Death (death touch 1/day), Evil (evil spells cast at +1 level).

Languages: Common, Infernal.

See the *Monster Manual* page 216 for lich special attacks and qualities. Note that the save DCs for Kel Virond's damaging touch, fear aura, and paralyzing touch are 18, and his fear aura is caster level 12th.

Possessions: +3 chainmail, +2 keen unholy scythe, phylactery of darkness, scroll of *restoration,* scroll of *harm,* scroll of *raise dead,* silver unholy symbol (150 gp), jeweled helm (750 gp), key to portcullis lock.

Tactics: If alerted to the PCs' presence at the portcullis, Kel Virond casts *protection from good* while lying in his sarcophagus. After the first two PCs enter the tomb proper, he casts *blade barrier* at the entrance of the hall to keep the rest at bay, hopefully dicing up a few intruders in the process. He then uses *summon monster V* to call forth a shadow mastiff (hp 48; *Monster Manual* 162) to keep the advancing PCs busy. Time permitting, he then casts *unholy blight, hold person, bull's strength,* and *divine power*

before emerging from his sarcophagus and wading into combat with his deadly scythe.

Kel Virond does not seek to kill all the PCs—at least not immediately. If he can render one of them helpless by any means (hit point reduction, *harm*, *hold person*, or paralyzing touch), he begins to bargain with the others for that character's life. He threatens to kill the helpless PC unless the others agree to free him from his imprisonment. If they refuse, he slays the captive with his death touch, *death knell*, or scythe, whichever is most convenient, then rejoins combat.

Treasure: The *phylactery of darkness* is a 1-inch cube of blackest adamantine inscribed with unholy prayers to Nerull. It is fused to Kel Virond's forehead, hidden under his full helmet. Because it maintains his very existence, he will not reveal its location under any circumstances. Once Kel Virond's helmet is removed, the *phylactery's* blue glow immediately reveals it as a

CHARIOT FEATS

The following feats are taken from *Sword and Fist: A Guidebook to Fighters and Monks*.

CHARIOT COMBAT [GENERAL]

You are skilled in chariot combat.

Prerequisite: Handle Animal skill.

Benefit: Once per round when either of your steeds is hit, you may make a Handle Animal check to negate the hit. The hit is negated if your Handle Animal check result is greater than the attack roll with all applicable modifiers included. (Essentially, the Handle Animal check result becomes the steed's Armor Class if it is higher than the steed's regular AC.)

CHARIOT TRAMPLE [GENERAL]

You are trained in using your chariot to knock down opponents.

Prerequisite: Chariot Combat, Handle Animal skill.

Benefit: When you attempt to overrun an opponent with your chariot, the target may not choose to avoid you. If you knock down the target, your steeds each may make one hoof (or stamp) attack against the opponent, gaining the standard +4 bonus on attack rolls against prone targets. The wheels of the chariot deal a further 2d6 points of damage automatically, but you must succeed at a Handle Animal check (DC varies depending on the size of the opponent) or upend the chariot. See the table below for sample DCs.

Item Struck or Run Over	DC
Light underbrush	10
Log	10
Muddy ground	10
Small pedestrian	10
Medium pedestrian	15
Large pedestrian (including horse)	20
Wooden fence	20
Heavy underbrush	20
Hedgerow	25
Another chariot, side or rear	25
Another chariot, head-on	30

piece of divine essence to the PC who guessed the answer to riddle 2. Alternatively, a successful bardic knowledge or Knowledge (religion) check (DC 25) allows any character to recognize the *phylactery* as an object sacred to Nerull.

The *phylactery* can be removed by chipping the skull (hardness 5, hp 10) away from it. Anyone, regardless of alignment, who touches the *phylactery* gains 1 negative level per round of contact with it. The Fortitude save DC to remove the negative level is 20. A good creature who touches it takes 1d6 points of unholy damage per round of contact in addition to the negative level.

The statue of Nerull has two large black opals (2,000 gp each) for eyes. Finding these requires a successful Search check (DC 15).

The *phylactery of darkness* acts as Virond's lich phylactery. Removing it from his headdestroys him permanently as surely as destroying a lich's normal phylactery would. If the PCs try to leave before removing the phylactery, they encounter the ghost once more, who demands that they finish the job.

Development: If the PCs agree to release Kel Virond, he tells them that they must dispel the *forbiddance* in the outer corridor and deal with the stone golem (area **3b**) if they haven't already. To get the lich outside, they can dig through the 70 feet of dirt and stone separating the crypt from the outside world, or use a spell such as *teleport* or *dimension door*.

The ghost of Adelros Melremen, if still present, attacks any PC who tries to remove the wards that keep the lich imprisoned. Also, a temple of Heironeous has been built on the ruins of Kel Virond's fortress on the hill above the crypt, and the clerics and paladins who reside there swiftly retaliate against anyone who frees him. Of course, if Kel Virond is set free, he flees with the *phylactery of darkness*.

If the PCs slay Kel Virond, remember that the lich is not truly defeated unless the PCs also remove the *phylactery of darkness*. The moment that a PC frees the *phylactery of darkness* and takes it in hand, the entire party is transported back to the *cauldron of melding*.

SLATE TUNDRA

When the PCs answer riddle 3 correctly, they are transported to a location somewhere east of Jotsplat, in the land of the ice barbarians. Anyone without winter clothing is subject to the effects of extreme cold (see page 86 of the *Dungeon Master's Guide* for details).

4A. OF BEARS AND WOLVES (EL 12)

Three frost giant brothers are out hunting today.

> A vast plain of broken, jagged slate stretches before you. The visibility is poor, and the wind howls as a light dusting of snow collects in the crevices between the dark gray stones. Slowly, the howling of the wind diverges into individual canine vocalizations coming from directly behind you.

If the PCs investigate, continue with the following.

> Less than 100 feet away, near a large rock outcropping, a half dozen immense, salivating white wolves are tearing a polar bear to pieces. A pale giant stands nearby, laughing.

Creatures: The frost giant is Oskrud, the youngest of the three brothers. He's been sent out with the family's pack of winter wolves to scare up some game, but he'd prefer to keep it all for himself.

Oskrud, Male Frost Giant: hp 130; *Monster Manual* 98–101.

Possessions: Huge greataxe, short sword, hunting horn, four throwing rocks, large sack holding bag of salt, whetstone, +2 *nunchaku*.

Winter Wolves, Advanced (6): CR 5*; Huge Magical Beast (cold); HD 10d10+50; hp 105 each; Init +4; Spd 50 ft.; AC 16, touch 8, flat-footed 16; BAB +10; Grap +26; Atk +16 melee (2d6+12, bite); Face/Reach 10 ft. by 20 ft./10 ft.; SA breath weapon, trip; SQ cold subtype, scent; AL NE; SV Fort +12, Ref +7, Will +4; Str 26, Dex 11, Con 20, Int 9, Wis 13, Cha 10.

Skills: Hide +7*, Listen +10, Move Silently +8, Spot +10, Wilderness Lore +1*. *Feats:* Alertness, Improved Initiative.

Breath Weapon (Su): Cone of cold, 15 ft., every 1d4 rounds; damage 4d6; Reflex half DC 20. Winter wolves can use their breath weapon while biting.

Trip (Ex): A winter wolf that hits with a bite attack can attempt to trip the opponent as a free action (see page 139 in the *Player's Handbook*) without making a touch attack or provoking an attack of opportunity. If the attempt fails, the opponent cannot react to trip the winter wolf.

Cold Subtype: A winter wolf is immune to cold damage, but

NEW WEAPON

Exotic Weapon—Ranged

	Cost	Damage	Critical	Range Increment	Weight	Type
Large Net	40 gp	*	*	20 ft.	20 lb.	*

*Except as noted below, a Large net works the same as a Medium net. It may be used effectively only by a Large or larger creature, or in two hands by a Medium creature with a Strength score of at least 20. A Large net is useful only against Tiny, Small, Medium, Large, or Huge creatures. A Large net can entangle up to two Medium or smaller creatures at once if they are within 5 feet of each other. A character who fulfills the size and Strength requirements who has Exotic Weapon Proficiency (net) can use a large net as well.

it takes double damage from fire unless a saving throw for half damage is allowed. In that case, it takes half damage on a success and double damage on a failure.

Skills: Winter wolves receive a +1 racial bonus to Listen, Move Silently, and Spot checks, and a +2 racial bonus to Hide checks. *Their natural coloration grants winter wolves a +7 racial bonus to Hide checks in areas of snow and ice. A winter wolf has a +4 racial bonus to Wilderness Lore checks when tracking by scent.

Polar Bear (1): hp 12 (normally 70); *Monster Manual* 194.

Tactics: As soon as Oskrud notices the PCs, he leaves three wolves to finish off the polar bear and takes the others with him to deal with the intruders. The winter wolves concentrate their breath weapons and trip attacks on one or two of the weakest-looking characters. Oskrud is very confident that he can handle puny little humanoids on his own, and he'd like to prove this to his big brothers. Thus, he blows his hunting to summon their aid only if his hit points drop to below 1/3 of normal and more than two of the winter wolves with him are dead.

Development: If Oskrud does blow his horn, his brothers appear in 2d4 rounds. If he is prevented from blowing his horn, his brothers come to meet him 2d6 minutes later, arriving from the east in their chariot. Go to area **4b** when they arrive. Oskrud is not interested in parleying with the PCs. If they capture him alive, he cooperates with interrogation but has no idea where they can find what they seek. He suggests that his brothers might know, however, and requests permission to summon them with his horn, if he has not already done so. Of course, Oskrud knows that his brothers will be no more interested in helping the PCs than he is.

Ad-hoc XP Award: Treat the winter wolves as CR 7 monsters for the purpose of determining the PCs' experience award.

4B. THE BIG BROTHERS

When the frost giant brothers are 300 feet away, each character can attempt a Listen check (DC 15) to detect them. If anyone is successful, read the following.

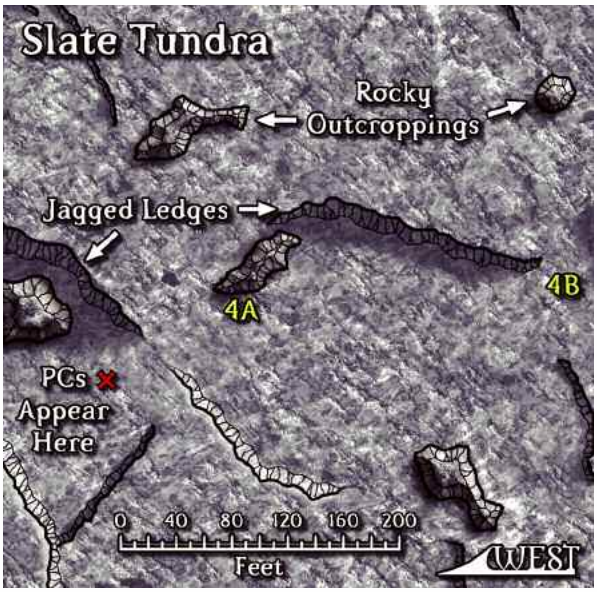
> A sound like distant, rumbling thunder becomes audible, as well as a faint crunching noise.

Allow each character a Spot check (DC 20) when the giants close to 150 feet. If anyone is successful, read the following.

> From the swirling snow to the east, a pair of hulking forms takes shape. Two wooly mammoths, each wearing a harness and armor, seem to be pulling a vehicle of some kind in your direction. The creatures trumpet loudly as they approach.

The mammoths draw a massive wooden chariot occupied by the two older frost giant brothers, Hrokkvir and Skrati. They are delighted to see actual enemies to fight.

Creatures (EL 14): This week has been the most joyous time in the two brothers' miserable lives. They are the elder sons of Aurgelmir, a particularly foul-tempered frost giant chieftain, and just days ago he was killed by a band of adventurers while



hunting. The "boys" are happy about this because now they can drive his prized mammoth-drawn chariot. Sure, they sneaked a few joyrides behind dad's back in the past, but they always got caught and received sound thrashings. Now that he's gone, Hrokkvir and Skrati are making up for lost time. They are currently out "land-trawling" across the plains, dragging large nets to catch animals and smaller humanoids.

Hrokkvir and Skrati, Male Frost Giant Ftr1 (2): CR 10; Large Giant (cold); HD 14d8+70 plus 1d10+5; hp 143; Init –1; Spd 40 ft.; AC 21, touch 8, flat-footed 21; BAB +11; Grap +24; Atk +19/+14/+9 melee (2d8+13/×3, Huge greataxe), or +10 ranged (1d6+9, rock) or +9/+4/–1 ranged touch (—, net); Face/Reach 5 ft. by 5 ft./10 ft.; SA rock throwing; SQ cold subtype, darkvision 60 ft., rock catching; AL CE; SV Fort +16, Ref +3, Will +4; Str 29, Dex 9, Con 21, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 11.

Skills: Climb +13, Handle Animal +2, Jump +13, Spot +6. *Feats:* Chariot Combat*, Chariot Trample*, Cleave, Exotic Weapon Proficiency (net), Great Cleave, Power Attack.

*Feats from *Sword and Fist*; see Chariot Feats sidebar. See *Monster Manual* page 98 for frost giant special attacks and qualities. Note that Hrokkvir and Skrati can each hurl rocks weighing 40 to 50 pounds with a range increment of 120 feet. Each brother can also catch Small, Medium, or Large rocks.

Possessions: Chain shirt, Huge greataxe, net, six throwing rocks, two large nets, *wheel of Kord*, silver statuette of a horse (300 gp), 4-ounce jar of *stone salve*, three hunks of cheese, bone whistle, 3-gallon wineskin, lump of amber (900 gp), haunch of moose, pair of skis (along with gear to secure them under the chariot wheels).

Wooly Mammoths (2): CR 8; Huge Animal; HD 16d8+80; hp 152; Init +0; Spd 40 ft.; AC 16, touch 8, flat-footed 16; Atk +20 melee (2d6+10, slam) and +15 melee (2d6+5, 2 stamps), or +20 melee (2d8+10, gore); Face/Reach 10 ft. by 20 ft./10 ft.; SA trample 2d8+15; SQ low-light vision, scent; AL N; SV Fort +15, Ref +10, Will +6; Str 30, Dex 10, Con 21, Int 2, Wis 13, Cha 7.

Skills: Listen +6, Spot +6.

See the Elephant entry on page 196 of the *Monster Manual* for mammoth special attacks and qualities. Note that the Reflex save DC for the mammoth's trample attack is 28.

Tactics: Hrokkvir is driving when the brothers first sight the party at a distance of 120 feet. As soon as they close to 100 feet, Skrati begins throwing rocks. At 20 feet, Skrati throws his net at the nearest opponent. Hrokkvir drives the chariot straight into the center of the party and attempts to trample as many PCs as possible on his first pass. (The mammoth-and-chariot combination has a 20-foot face, so theoretically he could trample a maximum of four Medium PCs.) After his first pass, he circles until Skrati nets at least one PC and secures the net to a cleat on the chariot. Characters trapped in a net are dragged over the sharp-edged slate, which deals 1d8 points of damage per character per round.

Thereafter, the giants switch places, and Hrokkvir has a go at trawling. While traveling at a double move (80 feet), the chariot can turn only 45 degrees in a round. Once both nets are occupied and all six throwing rocks have been used, the driver concentrates on trampling any remaining PCs while the passenger hacks at any he can reach with his greataxe in passing. Note that the chariot affords each giant one-quarter cover (+2 AC bonus and +1 Reflex save bonus, not included in the statistics above).

Treasure: The left wheel of the chariot is the *wheel of Kord*, a solid iron disk pierced in the center and embossed with Kord's holy symbol. The PC who correctly answered riddle 3 sees it surrounded by a blue glow. Any other PC can recognize it as the item for which the group came with a successful Knowledge (religion) check (DC 10). The *wheel of Kord* weighs more than 500 pounds.

Development: The PCs must do more than just grasp the *wheel of Kord* to be *teleported* back to the *cauldron of melding;* they must actually activate the item through a feat of Strength. A successful bardic knowledge or Knowledge (religion) check (DC 15) reveals that Kord often requires such a display to activate devices sacred to him. Once a PC raises the *wheel of Kord* overhead (Strength, DC 18) or performs a similar feat of Strength involving the wheel, the party is *teleported* back to the shrine.

OUT TO SEA

Upon giving the correct answer to ri-ddle 4, the PCs appear in an 18-foot-long, double-prowed rowboat in the middle of the Azure Sea.

> Blue water stretches as far as the eye can see in all directions, and the smell of salty air assails your nostrils. Your rowboat rides high on the blue swells and then slips back down into the troughs, but the sea is fairly calm. Your sturdy boat has a rudder at the back and looks like it would comfortably seat eight humans. It is equipped with two sets of oars.

Anyone who can read Elven and bothers to examine the mithral inlay along the outer portion of the bow can easily determine that the boat is named "Seasprite."

Seasprite: 4-in. thick; Hardness 5; hp 40.

5A. SQUID ATTACK (EL 9)

Before the PCs have a chance to decide on a direction, they are attacked by a giant squid. Any PC who makes a successful Spot check (DC 20) notices the following and is not surprised.

> A slim, silver form dashes toward your boat, just below the surface of the water. It's hard to tell exactly what it is, but a large eye stares up at you for a moment.

Creature: The giant squid noticed some tasty morsels inside the boat and decided to investigate.

Giant Squid: hp 70; *Monster Manual* 202.

Tactics: The squid attacks by reaching its tentacles into the boat. Each character inside the boat must make a successful Balance check (DC 10) each round that the boat is under attack or fall prone due to the rocking caused by the monster's attacks.

Development: A pseudoleviathan (see below) arrives 2d6 rounds after the battle with the squid begins, whether or not the fight is over.

5B. THE PSEUDOLEVIATHAN (EL 14)

Each character can attempt a Spot check (DC 15) 4 rounds after the battle with the giant squid begins. If anyone is successful, read the following.

> As your boat rides up the crest of a swell, a large fin slices through the waves near your craft. About 30 yards behind it comes a second fin, skinnier but taller than the first. The leading fin suddenly dives into the sea, and the second rises higher out of the water. It seems to be the tail of the biggest fish you've ever seen!

The party is being circled by the largest construct ever to cruise the ocean depths. Its head alone measures three times the length of the party's boat.

Creature: A successful Knowledge (nature) check (DC 15) identifies the creature as a pseudoleviathan, while a successful bardic knowledge or Knowledge (religion) check (DC 20 for either) reveals that the creature is a construct sacred to Obad-Hai, built in the image of one of his most beloved creatures. The pseudoleviathan is essentially a massive, oceangoing, submersible shrine to the god of nature. A successful Spot check (DC 20) reveals that the creature was constructed from the remains of thousands and thousands of sea creatures gathered over time from the ocean floor. This pseudoleviathan is currently being used to collect fish for study under the direction of a druid (see area **5c**, below).

Pseudoleviathan: CR 14; Colossal Construct (aquatic); HD 24d10; hp 132; Init +0; Spd swim 40 ft.; AC 23, touch 2, flat-footed 23; Atk +25 melee (4d8+16, bite) and +20 melee (4d6+8, tail slap); Face/Reach 20 ft. by 40 ft./10 ft.; SA frightful presence, gulp; SQ blindsight 100 ft., cold resistance 25, construct traits, DR 20/+3; AL N; SV Fort +8, Ref +8, Will +9; Str 43, Dex 10, Con –, Int –, Wis 13, Cha 14.

See the pseudoleviathan entry in "Appendix II" for the pseudoleviathan's special attacks and qualities. Note that the Will save DC for its frightful presence ability is 24.

Tactics: The pseudoleviathan circles the party's boat for 2 rounds before diving underneath and coming up for a gulp attempt against the entire boat. The bite deals no damage because the druid controlling the construct wants to capture the PCs alive. The pseudoleviathan keeps trying to swallow the boat and the party until either it is successful or more than 150 points of damage have been dealt to it. As long as any PCs are in the boat, one of them (their choice) must make a Profession (sailor) check each round. This check result is the boat's AC against the creature's bite attacks.

Development: If the PCs are swallowed, each character in the boat must make a Profession (sailor) or Balance check (DC 15) to stay in the boat as it slides into the pseudoleviathan's gullet. Failure indicates the PC goes overboard and must make Swim checks (DC 15) each round or risk drowning. Death by drowning is unlikely, though, since Caedra (see area **5c**) rescues drowning PCs after 2d6 rounds.

5C. IN THE BELLY OF THE BEAST (EL 13)

The water inside the creature's stomach is quite rough because of the leviathan's movements. The underwater visibility within the creature's belly is 10 feet.

When the PCs' boat first enters the stomach, the leviathan dives for 1 full minute (see "Inside the Leviathan: Table 1" for the effect on the boat), then levels out. Shortly thereafter, the PCs receive a visitor.

> After your harrowing trip down the sea creature's throat, you arrive in its cavernous belly. A pocket of air that extends the entire length of the stomach allows normal breathing, and a torch lashed to a small leather boat floating inside the stomach provides light by which to see. But the beast's swimming rocks your boat enough that simply staying afloat presents a challenge.

The leather boat is a watertight coracle large enough to seat four Medium creatures. The torch burns because of a *continual flame* spell cast upon it.

> Suddenly, a smiling female surfaces near your boat and waves to you. "Welcome to the pseudoleviathan," she says. "I'm sorry for the rough reception, but you looked like you were in some distress, so I thought I'd invite you in the only way I could. How did you come to be way out here in such a little boat?"

The woman is Caedra Halireth, the half-elf druid who lives in and controls the pseudoleviathan. She commands it mentally through the amulet she wears and has given the construct a standing order to gently swallow interesting creatures for study.

The air supply inside the stomach will last only 60 minutes, minus 5 minutes for each party member beyond four, unless the druid commands the pseudoleviathan to surface and replenish the air. The denizens of the creature's stomach do not currently require any air themselves.

The piece of the *primal anchor* that the PCs seek is called the leviathan's heart. Appropriately enough, this device functions as the pseudoleviathan's heart. Removing it kills the construct and cause it to sink, something the denizens of the creature would surely object to (see **Creatures**, below).

Creatures: Caedra Halireth has always dreamed of communing with all the creatures of the deep blue sea. As a girl, she ran away from home and disguised herself as a boy so that she could become a sailor. Her secret was eventually discovered, but by then she had earned such respect that she was allowed to remain a part of the crew. One night during a storm, she was swept overboard but rescued by the pseudoleviathan at the command of its creator, an aged druid named Jorn. Caedra was so entranced with the creature and so eager to learn about undersea life that Jorn agreed to become her mentor and teach her everything he knew. Jorn died some years ago, leaving Caedra mistress of the pseudoleviathan. She is now completely at home under the sea, either in her own form or in that of a sea creature.

Two companions accompany her in the stomach: Hhoshiirll, an awakened Large shark, and Clobgloob, an awakened giant octopus. The three of them use the pseudoleviathan to travel the oceans in search of new creatures, boldly exploring the reefs, wrecks, and lost civilizations that litter the sea bottom. Every morning, Caedra casts *water breathing* on herself (duration 26 hours). She also carries extra *potions of water breathing* for emergencies.

Caedra Halireth, Female Half-Elf Drd13: CR 13; Medium Humanoid (5 ft. 8 in. tall); HD 13d8+39; hp 97; Init +5; Spd 30 ft.; AC 15, touch 13, flat-footed 14; BAB +9; Grap +9; Atk +11/+6 melee (1d8+2/×3, *+2 giant bane shortspear*), or +10/+5 melee (1d4+1/19–20, *adamantine dagger*); SA spells; SQ a thousand faces, animal companion, half-elf traits, nature sense, resist nature's lure, trackless step, venom immunity, *wild shape* (Tiny, Small, Medium, Large, or dire animal 4/day), woodland stride; AL N; SV Fort +11, Ref +5, Will +11; Str 10, Dex 12, Con 17, Int 11, Wis 17, Cha 14.

Skills: Animal Empathy +12, Concentration +10, Heal +9, Knowledge (nature) +13, Profession (sailor) +13, Swim +10, Wilderness Lore +11. *Feats:* Blind-Fight, Brew Potion, Endurance, Forge Ring, Improved Initiative.

Druid Spells Prepared (6/6/6/5/4/3/2/1; base save DC = 13 + spell level): 0—*create water, detect magic, flare, know direction, light, purify food and drink;* 1st—*animal friendship* ×2, *calm animals, cure light wounds, endure elements, magic fang;* 2nd—*barkskin, charm person or animal, hold animal, speak with animals, warp wood, wood shape;* 3rd—*cure moderate wounds, greater magic fang, neutralize poison, speak with plants, water breathing;* 4th—*control plants, cure serious wounds, dispel magic, rusting grasp;* 5th—*commune with nature, cure critical wounds, summon nature's ally* V; 6th—*antilife shell, stone tell;* 7th—*summon nature's ally* VII.

Languages: Aquan, Common, Elven.

Possessions: +2 leather armor, +2 giant bane shortspear, adamantine

INSIDE THE PSEUDOLEVIATHAN

Roll d% for every 5 minutes that the PCs spend inside the pseudoleviathan and consult **Table 1** to determine the creature's activities during the upcoming 5 minutes and the effects of those actions on the PCs. Subtract 10 from the d% roll for every 30 points of damage the creature has taken (minimum 1%), and increase the frequency of the check to every 1d4 rounds as soon as the pseudoleviathan begins to take damage.

Characters attempting to swim inside the stomach encounter "rough" water as long as the creature is swimming levelly; at all other times the water is treated as "stormy" (see the Swim skill description on page 75 of the *Player's Handbook*). The water level inside the creature's stomach can change quite dramatically with its movements, and characters may begin to drown if submerged. (See the Drowning Rule on page 85 of the *Dungeon Master's Guide* for details.)

TABLE 1. PSEUDOLEVIATHAN'S ACTIVITIES

d%	Activity	Effect on Creatures in Stomach
1–15	Climbing	Reflex save (DC 20) or fall out of the boat.*
16–30	Diving	Reflex save (DC 20) or fall out of boat.*
31–90	Level	Reflex save (DC 10) or fall swimming out of boat.*
91–00	Collecting	Reflex save (DC 25) or fall out of fish for study**
		boat.* (swallowing)

*A successful Profession (sailor) check (DC 15) by one of the PCs gives everyone in the boat a +4 circumstance bonus on this Reflex save.

**There is a 20% chance that a larger aquatic creature is also collected. Roll d% and consult Table 2 in this case.

TABLE 2. COLLECTED AQUATIC CREATURES

d%	Creature	Number Appearing	CR
01–02	Sea hag	1	4
03	Kraken	1	12
04–10	Lacedon	2d4	2
11–17	Merrow	1d4	2
18–23	Orca	1	5
24–30	Porpoise	1d4	1/2
31–37	Large shark	1d2	2
38–43	Dire shark	1	9
44–55	Squid	1d6	1
56–65	Giant squid	1	9
66–68	Adult tojanida	1	5
69	Dragon turtle	1	9
70–79	Octopus	1	1
80–88	Giant octopus	1	8
89–94	Sea lion	1d2	4
95–100	Huge viper	1	3

*dagger, amulet of pseudoleviathan command**, ring of protection +2, ring of freedom of movement, 4 potions of water breathing.*

*See "New Magic Item" sidebar.

Hhoshiirll, Male Awakened Large Shark: CR 3 (the shark's CR is one higher due to the effects of the *awaken* spell); Large Animal (aquatic); HD 9d8+9; hp 49; Init +2; Spd swim 60 ft.; AC 15, touch 11, flat-footed 13; BAB +6; Grap +13; Atk +8 melee (1d8+4, bite); Face/Reach 5 ft. by 10 ft./5 ft.; SQ keen scent, low-light vision; AL N; SV Fort +7, Ref +8, Will +4; Str 17, Dex 15, Con 13, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 3.

Skills: Listen +7, Spot +7, Swim +11.

Languages: Aquan.

See *Monster Manual* page 201 for Large shark special qualities.

Note that PCs of this level won't gain experience for defeating Hhoshiirll.

Clobgloob, Female Awakened Giant Octopus: CR 9 (the octopus's CR is one higher due to the effects of the *awaken* spell); Large Animal (aquatic); HD 10d8+10; hp 55; Init +2; Spd 20 ft., swim 30 ft.; AC 18, touch 11, flat-footed 16; BAB +7; Grap +16; Atk +11 melee (1d4+5, 8 tentacle rakes) and +6 melee (1d8+2, bite); Reach 10 ft.; SA constrict 2d8+7, improved grab; SQ ink cloud, jet, low-light vision; AL N; SV Fort +8, Ref +9, Will +4; Str 20, Dex 15, Con 13, Int 14, Wis 12, Cha 5.

Skills: Hide +11, Listen +4, Spot +4, Swim +13.

Languages: Aquan, Common, Elven.

See page 199 in the *Monster Manual* for giant octopus special attacks and qualities. Note that Clobgloob deals 2d8+7 points of damage with each successful constrict attack.

Possessions: pouch, *potion of cure moderate wounds*, gold-and-ruby necklace (400 gp), five pearls (75 gp each).

Tactics: Caedra and her companions are very friendly at first because they have so few visitors to talk to. This attitude changes quite dramatically when they become aware of the party's plans. Caedra considers the pseudoleviathan a holy object as well as a home, and it would take considerable convincing for her to allow it to be damaged or destroyed. Treat Caedra as unfriendly if the PCs broach this topic with her, rather than indifferent, which is her actual initial attitude (see **Table 5–4: Influencing NPC Attitude** on page 149 in the *Dungeon Master's Guide* for details). Caedra must be swayed to helpful if the PCs intend to avoid a fight here.

If the PCs do not convince Caedra of the need for them to take the *leviathan heart*, she and her companions try to stop the party from injuring the creature. They try nonlethal means first; if those are ineffective, they switch to deadlier tactics. As a last resort, Caedra orders the pseudoleviathan to swallow enough water to fill its stomach in an attempt to drown the PCs (see the Drowning Rule on page 85 of the *Dungeon Master's Guide*). If this tactic fails to stop the PCs, she tells the creature to expel the entire contents of its stomach through its mouth. This process takes 5 full rounds, during which the water is treated as stormy. At the end of 5 rounds, everything inside the stomach is forced out, taking 2d6 points of damage on the way. Each character may make a Swim or Profession (sailor) check (DC 35) to resist expulsion and stay inside, if desired, but the damage still applies.

Treasure: The *leviathan heart* is the elemental core of the construct. It is a misshapen lump of fused stone, bone, coral, and shells that weighs approximately 100 pounds. It can be seen either when the wall of the stomach immediately adjacent to the heart is out of the water (while the leviathan is climbing), or when a PC is underwater (Spot, DC 20, in the former case, or DC 25 in the latter). The character who guessed the answer to riddle 4 sees the heart surrounded by a blue glow.

To get the heart, a PC has to cut through the lining around it and deal at least 50 points of slashing damage to remove it from the creature's body. Removal of the heart immediately ends the life of the pseudoleviathan, and it begins to settle onto the bottom of the ocean. Water begins to pour into the stomach, filling the void completely within 5 minutes.

Securely lashed inside Caedra's coracle are 2 *potions of water breathing*, 254 gp in a pouch, a silver-and-emerald ring (worth 1,500 gp), and a silver-and-gold hand mirror (worth 220 gp). Lying at the bottom of the leviathan's stomach, hidden under the debris of many a sunken vessel, is a locked iron chest (Search, DC 20). It contains 3,800 gp, a *wand of fireball* (24 charges, caster level 8th), and a *mirror of opposition* (at the bottom of the chest).

Locked Iron Chest: 1 1/2 in. thick; Hardness 10; hp 45; break DC 28; Open Lock DC 30.

Development: As soon as a PC grasps the freed *leviathan heart*, the entire party is *teleported* back to the *cauldron of melding*.

NEW MAGIC ITEM

A pseudoleviathan responds to verbal commands from its creator, but it can also be controlled with an item known as the *amulet of pseudoleviathan command*.

Amulet of Pseudoleviathan Command: This pendant depicts a leviathan swimming in a circle. It allows the wearer to telepathically control a particular pseudoleviathan that was created at the same time as the amulet. The item's range is 300 feet; beyond that distance the creature cannot receive instructions. The amulet also allows the wearer to see through the leviathan's eyes (whether or not he or she is in the cockpit) and to make use of the creature's blindsight ability. If the wearer moves beyond the command range, the pseudoleviathan continues to carry out its last instructions until control is re-established.

Caster Level: 18th; *Prerequisites:* Craft Wondrous Item, *greater scrying, dominate animal, command plants; Market Price:* 30,000 gp; *Weight:* —.

THE FACE OF CHAOS (EL VARIES)

The minion of chaos is busy tearing up farmhouses and devouring livestock west of Shiboleth while the populace flees for the false safety of the city. (Determine the creature's exact location based on the time that has passed since the PCs met Tagus, assuming that it continues to head approximately east). Any PC heading toward the Rushmoors from Shiboleth can attempt a Spot check (DC 1d8+12) every half hour to sight a fleeing inhabitant, who can point out the direction of the minion's last known location if requested. When the PCs come within 2 miles of the creature, a successful Listen check (DC 15) allows them to pinpoint its direction from its thunderous bellows and noises of destruction.

When the characters finally see the minion of chaos, read the following aloud.

> Before you is a creature that looks like something out of a demented druid's fevered nightmare. More than 50 feet tall, it resembles a monstrously huge, black tree, but the "branches" are writhing about like slimy serpents, and the thick, bloated trunk is divided into five elephantine legs. It bellows as its tentacles lash out to encircle a sheep nearly 10 yards distant. The helpless sheep rises high into the air and disappears into what must be a maw in the midst of the snakelike appendages, judging by the horrific chomping sounds that ensue.

To sever the creature's connection to the Far Realms, the characters must hit it with a ranged touch attack using the *primal anchor*. The item functions as a thrown weapon (range increment 20 feet). If it hits, the creature is cut off from its plane of origin (no saving throw). Read the following aloud if the characters score a hit with the anchor.

> Thunder roars as blue energy crackles over the creature's body. Slowly, the beast appears to shrink in size until it has lost a third of its apparent mass. Although still horrible in appearance, it doesn't look quite so invulnerable.

Creature (EL 20 or 14): Statistics for the minion of chaos depend on whether or not it has been struck by the *primal anchor*. The first set of statistics given below are for the unanchored minion; the second set is for the anchored version.

Minion of Chaos (unanchored version): CR 20; Gargantuan Outsider (chaos) (60 ft. tall); HD 35d8+245; hp 402; Init +7; Spd 40 ft., swim 20 ft.; AC 39, touch 9, flat-footed 36; BAB +35; Grap +59; Atk +42 melee (4d6+12, bite) and +40 melee (2d6+6, 14 tentacle rakes) and +40 melee (2d8+6, 5 stamps), or +33 ranged touch (paralysis, 1d4 paralysis rays); Face/Reach 15 ft. by 15 ft./30 ft.; SA energy drain, frightful presence, improved grab, paralysis rays, spell-like abilities, swallow whole; SQ alien mind, blindsight 200 ft., DR 30/+5, immunities (acid, cold, electricity, fire, poison), outsider traits, protective aura, regeneration 30, SR 35; AL CN; SV Fort +26, Ref +22, Will +22; Str 34, Dex 17, Con 24, Int 15, Wis 17, Cha 24.

Skills: Bluff +22, Concentration +45, Diplomacy +13, Hide +5, Intimidate +47, Knowledge (arcana) +22, Knowledge (the planes) +24, Listen +43, Move Silently +16, Search +40, Sense Motive +41, Spellcraft +40, Spot +43, Swim +20. *Feats:* Alertness, Blind-Fight, Cleave, Dodge, Great Cleave, Improved Initiative, Mobility, Multiattack, Power Attack.

Spell-Like Abilities: At will—*chaos hammer, confusion, death knell, deeper darkness, feeblemind, insanity, unholy aura, unholy blight*; 1/day—*cloudkill, creeping doom, horrid wilting.* Caster level 20th; save DC 17 + spell level.

See the minion of chaos entry in "Appendix II" for the minion's other special attacks and qualities. Note that the Fortitude saves for its energy drain and paralysis ray attacks are DC 34, and the Will save DCs for its frightful presence attack and its alien mind special quality are also 34. A swallowed creature takes 2d8+12 points of bludgeoning damage plus 2d8 points of acid damage and 1d3 negative levels per round from the creature's gullet.

Minion of Chaos (anchored version): CR 14; Gargantuan Outsider (chaos) (40 ft. tall); HD 25d8+125; hp 237; Init +4; Spd 40 ft., swim 20 ft.; AC 26, touch 6, flat-footed 26; BAB +25; Grap +43; Atk +26 melee (4d6+6, bite) and +24 melee (2d6+3, 10 tentacle rakes) and +24 melee (2d8+3, 3 stamps); Face/Reach 10 ft. by 10 ft./20 ft.; SA improved grab, spell-like abilities, swallow whole; SQ alien mind, blindsight 200 ft, DR 10/+3, outsider traits, resistances (acid 20, electricity 20), SR 25; AL CN; SV Fort +19, Ref +14, Will +13; Str 22, Dex 11, Con 20, Int 7, Wis 9, Cha 10.

Skills: Concentration +19, Diplomacy +2, Hide +0, Intimidate +21, Knowledge (the planes) +1, Listen +20, Move Silently +11, Search +16, Sense Motive +15, Spellcraft +4, Spot +20, Swim +14. *Feats:* Alertness, Blind-Fight, Cleave, Great Cleave, Improved Initiative, Multiattack, Power Attack.

Spell-Like Abilities: 1/day—*chaos hammer, confusion, darkness, forget.* Caster level 10th; save DC 10 + spell level.

See the minion of chaos entry in "Appendix II" for the minion's other special attacks and qualities, but note that it now has access only to those that appear above. The Will save DC for its alien mind special quality is now 22. A swallowed creature takes 2d8+9 points of bludgeoning damage plus 2d8 points of acid damage per round from the creature's gullet.

Tactics: The minion of chaos simply tries to devour every living thing in its path. By doing so, it increases the power of its masters in the Far Realms. It prefers swallowing opponents whole over stomping them to death or killing them outright with its spell-like abilities, but it will resort to any method at its disposal if hard pressed.

Development: The minion of chaos dissolves into a bubbling pile of muck when slain. If Tagus Grehan has not accompanied the party throughout the adventure, he has been tracking them since they set off to find the minion. In either case, he makes a stealthy attempt to grab the *primal anchor* from the remains of the minion of chaos when the PCs leave. If they grab it first and take it along, Tagus follows them again and attempts to take the item while the PCs are busy with their

next encounter.

The PCs can easily (Wilderness Lore, DC 5) track the creature back to Rhyll in the Rushmoors if they think to do so. If the PCs choose not to trace the origin of the minion and Tagus is present, he urges them to reconsider, since whoever summoned it can probably summon another. If they still refuse, Tagus or a local lord gathers an expedition to wipe out the cultists. Their success, or lack thereof, is up to you.

BLACK OBELISK (EL 16)

As a boy, the half-elf Rhyll never felt at ease among either the humans or the elves in his hometown of Shiboleth. Derided for his illegitimate birth by the other children, Rhyll withdrew into the world of books available to him through his mother's employment as a charwoman at the Collegium Shibolethensis.

Rhyll also enjoyed long hikes in the Rushmoors near his home. There, in the marshy bottoms, he found some comfort in the croaking of the amphibians—it seemed almost as if they were speaking to him. One day when Rhyll was in his late teens, he ventured into a dark section of the moors where he had never gone before. While exploring, he stumbled upon a five-sided, solid basalt obelisk. The structure stood more than 30 feet high, and its surface was covered with deeply incised runes in an unknown tongue. Intrigued, he made repeated visits to the obelisk and painstakingly copied the alien characters into his notebook. During his visits, the ambient croaking sounds seemed to take on intelligible qualities, but still he could not quite understand their message.

When he came of age, Rhyll entered the Collegium and focused his studies on the school of Divination. But he never gave up trying to translate the obelisk's inscription, and he studied old languages whenever he could, hoping to find a clue.

After he graduated, Rhyll continued to dabble in magic, investigating various methods of controlling the human mind. But deciphering the runes was still his primary goal. The longer it took, the more obsessed he became with the project, until it eventually began to strain his sanity. Rhyll traveled from Shiboleth to Greyhawk, then to Rauxes, and eventually to Far Ekbir across the Wastes. It was there, penniless and starving, that he chanced upon the key to the inscription: the Sha'altnakra Fragment. The cramped, handwritten script of this ancient volume was a mad mishmash of forbidden formulae and rituals in Abyssal, Infernal, and Draconic, as well as several dead mortal languages. A single perusal of the text was enough to rend Rhyll's mind from its foundations. He now understood the message carved into the obelisk—the carvings detailed rituals for bringing the forces of the Far Realms back to Oerth.

With his discovery, Rhyll attained the unique clarity of the newly converted and immediately set about preparing the way for the arrival of the masters. He collected like-minded individuals—mostly lost souls looking for direction—from the back alleys and waterfront districts of Ekbir, and his maniacal devotion to his new path energized all their lives with new purpose. By leading his followers in unwholesome chants and rites, he managed to summon a chaos beast, which put him in direct contact with its masters in the Far Realms. After spending some time communing with these beings, he knew what he had to do next. Soon, several offspring of prominent families went missing, and the normally passive local authorities focused their attention on Rhyll's cult. When he and his followers were eventually forced to flee Ekbir, Rhyll heard the call of the obelisk drawing him back to the Rushmoors.

In the shadow of the great stone, away from the prying eyes of the unenlightened, Rhyll and his cultists continued their dark masses and grisly sacrifices. The Lords of Outer Chaos eventually "rewarded" the cult by sending a minion of chaos. After devouring a goodly number of the faithful, the creature set off in the direction of Shiboleth to consume whatever souls it could find and strengthen the foothold that its masters had made there eons ago. Meanwhile, Rhyll and his followers con-

tinued their unholy rites on the moor, ecstatic in the knowledge that the door had finally been opened for their masters.

When the characters follow the minion's trail back to the obelisk, they find Rhyll and his myriad followers cavorting and capering around the ancient monolith in their obscene ritualistic dances.

A makeshift camp of sorts has been set up near the obelisk. Rhyll has cast an *alarm* spell on the approach to the place of worship to warn him of intruders.

Creatures: The revelers consist of Rhyll, his pseudonatural toad familiar, his chaos beast cohort, and some of his followers, including several armed thugs Rhyll recruited in Ekbir and eventually converted to his cause.

Rhyll of Shiboleth, Male Half-Elf Div7/Alienist5: CR 12; Medium Humanoid (5 ft. 6 in. tall); HD 12d4+39; hp 69; Init +1; Spd 30 ft.; AC 14, touch 12, flat-footed 13; BAB +6; Grap +6; Atk +8/+3 melee (1d4+2 plus 1d6 fire/×3 plus 2d10 fire, +2 *flaming burst punching dagger*); SA spells; SQ alien blessing, half-elf traits, mad certainty, pseudonatural toad familiar (Crindlap), *summon alien*; AL CN; SV Fort +8, Ref +6, Will +11; Str 10, Dex 13, Con 17, Int 19, Wis 14, Cha 12.

Skills: Concentration +18, Knowledge (arcana) +19, Knowledge (the planes) +21, Listen +12, Scry +15, Search +5, Spellcraft +14, Spot +12.

Feats: Alertness*, Brew Potion, Craft Wondrous Item, Extend Spell, Leadership, Scribe Scroll, Skill Focus (Knowledge—the planes), Spell Focus (Enchantment), Spell Penetration.

*Only when Crindlap is within 5 feet.

Languages: Abyssal, Celestial, Common, Draconic, Elven, Infernal.

Alien Blessing (Ex): Rhyll has a +1 insight bonus on all saving throws, but has permanently lost 2 points of Wisdom (already included in the statistics above).

Pseudonatural Toad Familiar (Su): Rhyll's familiar, Crindlap, while still outwardly a toad, has become a pseudonatural creature (see below). He grants Rhyll the same benefits as a normal toad familiar would grant a 7th-level master.

Mad Certainty (Ex): Rhyll has an additional 3 hit points, as though from the Toughness feat. However, his mind has begun to fracture, and he has developed a phobia against birds and avian creatures. He suffers a –2 penalty on all saving throws, attack rolls, and Charisma-based skill and ability checks with regard to birds, while any such creature gains a +2 morale bonus to AC and saving throws against Rhyll.

***Summon Alien* (Sp):** When Rhyll casts any *summon monster* spell, he summons a pseudonatural version of the creature (see template below).

Wizard Spells Prepared (5/6/6/6/5/4/3; base save DC = 14 + spell level): 0—*daze**, *detect poison*†*, *ray of frost*, *read magic*, *resistance*; 1st—*alarm* (already cast), *comprehend languages*†*, *expeditious retreat*, *hypnotism**, *mage armor*, *obscuring mist*; 2nd—*alter self*, *detect thoughts*†*, *hypnotic pattern*, *invisibility*, *summon monster II*, *Tasha's hideous laughter**; 3rd—*clairaudience/clairvoyance*†*, *gaseous form*, *hold person**, *protection from elements*, *suggestion**, *summon monster III*; 4th—*confusion**, *fire shield*, *phantasmal killer*, *scrying*†*, *summon monster IV*; 5th—*contact other plane*†*, *dominate person**, *feeblemind**, *mind fog**; 6th—extended *summon monster V*, *mass suggestion**, *true seeing*†.

Spellbook #1: 0—*arcane mark*, *dancing lights*, *daze**, *detect magic*, *detect*

poison†, *flare, ghost sound, light, mage hand, mending, open/close, prestidigitation, ray of frost, read magic, resistance;* 1st—*alarm, charm person**, *comprehend languages*†, *detect secret doors*†, *detect undead*†, *expeditious retreat, hypnotism**, *identify*†, *mage armor, obscuring mist, true strike*†.

Spellbook #2: 2nd—*alter self, detect thoughts*†, *hypnotic pattern, invisibility, locate object*†, *see invisibility*†, *summon monster II, Tasha's hideous laughter**.

Spellbook #3: 3rd—*clairaudience/clairvoyance*†, *gaseous form, hold person**, *protection from elements, suggestion**, *summon monster III, tongues*†.

Spellbook #4: 4th—*confusion**, *emotion**, *fire shield, lesser geas**, *locate creature*†, *minor globe of invulnerability, phantasmal killer, scrying*†, *summon monster IV;* 5th—*contact other plane*†, *dominate person**, *feeblemind**, *mind fog**, *summon monster V;* 6th—*analyze dweomer*†, *extended summon monster V, legend lore*†, *mass suggestion**, *true seeing*†.

*Enchantment spell. Spell Focus feat makes the save DC (if applicable) for these spells 16 + spell level.

†Divination spell. Rhyll's prohibited school is Necromancy.

Possessions: +2 flaming burst punching dagger, bracers of armor +2, ring of protection +1, horn of fog, 2 potions of cure serious wounds, potion of blur, potion of nondetection, scroll of *invisibility,* scroll of *minor globe of invulnerability,* silver tooled belt inset with garnets and pearls (800 gp), gold-and-sapphire ring (500 gp), key to chest. *In camp:* locked chest (Open Lock, DC 25) containing 2,300 gp and four wizard spellbooks (see above).

Crindlap, Male Pseudonatural Toad Familiar: CR —; Diminutive Outsider; HD 1/4 d8 (effective 12d8); hp 34; Init +1; Spd 5 ft.; AC 19, touch 15, flat-footed 18; BAB +7; Grap –10; Atk +11 melee (damage varies, touch); Face/Reach 1 ft. by 1 ft./0 ft.; SA true strike; SQ alternate form, deliver touch spells, DR 10/+3, empathic link, improved evasion, low-light vision, outsider traits, resistances (acid 20, electricity 20), share spells, speak with amphibians, speak with master, SR 24; AL CN; SV Fort +4, Ref +5, Will +10; Str 1, Dex 12, Con 11, Int 9, Wis 14, Cha 4.

Skills: Concentration +15, Hide +21, Listen +9, Scry +10, Spot +9.

See "Pseudonatural Creature" template, below, for details of alternate form and true strike abilities. Note that since Crindlap has no natural attack of his own, he can use true strike only when delivering a touch attack for Rhyll.

Chaos Beast: hp 62; *Monster Manual* 34.

Thugs, Male Human War1 (9): CR 1/2 each; Medium Humanoid; HD 1d8+5; hp 13; Init +0; Spd 20 ft.; AC 14, touch 10, flat-footed 14; BAB +1; Grap +3; Atk +4 melee (2d4+3/18–20, falchion); AL CN; SV Fort +4, Ref +0, Will –1; Str 14, Dex 10, Con 15, Int 9, Wis 8, Cha 10.

Skills: Handle Animal +2, Intimidate +4, Ride (horse) +2. *Feats:* Toughness, Weapon Focus (falchion).

Possessions: Scale mail, falchion, pouch with 2d10 gp.

Followers, Male and Female Human Com1 (65): CR 1/2; Medium Humanoid; HD 1d4+4; hp 9; Init +0; Spd 30 ft.; AC 10, touch 10, flat-footed 10; BAB +0; Grap +1; Atk +1 melee (1d6+1, club); AL CN; SV Fort +1, Ref +0, Will –2; Str 12, Dex 10, Con 12, Int 7, Wis 7, Cha 9.

Skills: Swim +5, Use Rope +4. *Feats:* Endurance, Toughness.

Possessions: Club.

Tactics: If Rhyll becomes alerted to the presence of intruders, either by his *alarm* spell or by some other means, he sends his thugs to investigate and tries to blend in with his followers. Rhyll is willing to use any resource at his disposal (*expeditious retreat, alter self, invisibility, undetectable alignment, horn of fog,* or the like) to escape rather than fight. If cornered, he uses his summoning spells to put obstacles between himself and the attackers so that he can bring more powerful Enchantment spells (*suggestion, confusion,* and the like) to bear on his opponents. The thugs and followers defend Rhyll fanatically.

Throughout the battle, Rhyll's chaos beast cohort continues to cavort around the obelisk. It attacks anyone, friend or foe (except Rhyll), who comes within reach.

The cultists attack en masse, trying to overwhelm opponents with their sheer numbers. They put the Aid Another action to great use, trying to grapple individual enemies and pin them before trying to pound with clubs and blades.

Development: If Rhyll dies, his remaining followers become demoralized and surrender. They flee the battle if they lose more than 75% of their original numbers. If Rhyll escapes, he doesn't return to the obelisk for at least a year.

CONCLUSION

With Rhyll and the minion of chaos defeated, the only remaining issue is Tagus and his plan to steal the *primal anchor.* If the PCs can keep the item out of his hands for a week, it disintegrates on its own. If he does obtain it, he uses it to defeat the good outsiders that regularly interfere with the work of his temple, as described in "The Truth About Tagus." Retrieving the *primal anchor* or simply preventing Tagus from using it could constitute a whole new mission for the PCs.

Meanwhile, Phladris Renolle continues to languish in the dungeon at the Temple of Nerull. Investigations into the elf's disappearance ultimately lead back to the priest of Nerull, but by the time the PCs discover where he is, the temple's leaders may have returned, making it a much more difficult task to sneak into the dungeons.

Finally, if Rhyll managed to escape the carnage at the obelisk, he is still slavishly devoted to furthering the ends of the Lords of Outer Chaos. His activities toward that end could provide endless trouble for the PCs.

APPENDIX I

PSEUDONATURAL CREATURES

This template is taken from *Tome and Blood: A Guidebook to Wizards and Sorcerers.*

Pseudonatural creatures dwell between the stars and beyond the planes as we know them, nestled in the far realms of insan-

ity. When summoned to the Material Plane, they often take the forms of familiar creatures, though they are more gruesome in appearance than their earthly counterparts. Alternatively, they may appear in a manner more consistent with their origins—a mass of writhing tentacles is a favorite appearance, although other terrible forms are always possible.

CREATING A PSEUDONATURAL CREATURE

"Pseudonatural" is a template that can be added to any corporeal creature (referred to hereafter as the base creature). The creature's type changes to outsider. It uses all the base creature's statistics and special abilities except as noted here.

Special Attacks: A pseudonatural creature retains all the special attacks of the base creature and also gains the following.

True Strike (Su): Once per day, a pseudonatural creature gains a +20 insight bonus on a single attack roll of its choice. It is not affected by the miss chance that applies to attacks against a concealed target.

Special Qualities: A pseudonatural creature retains all the special qualities of the base creature and also gains the following. (If the base creature already has one or more of these special qualities, use the better value.)

Resistances: A pseudonatural creature gains electricity and acid resistance according to the table below.

Damage Reduction: A pseudonatural creature gains damage reduction according to the table below.

Hit Dice	Resistances	Damage Reduction (Acid, Electricity)
1–3	5	—
4–7	10	5/+1
8–11	15	5/+2
12+	20	10/+3

Spell Resistance: A pseudonatural creature gains spell resistance equal to double its Hit Dice (maximum 25).

Alternate Form (Su): At will, a pseudonatural creature can take the form of a grotesque, tentacled mass. This change does not alter the creature's available attack modes, but each opponent takes a –1 morale penalty on attack rolls against it.

Saves: Same as the base creature.

Abilities: Same as the base creature, but Intelligence score is at least 3.

Skills: Same as the base creature

Feats: Same as the base creature

Climate/Terrain: Any land and underground

Organization: Same as the base creature

Challenge Rating: Up to 3 HD, as the base creature; 4–7 HD, as the base creature +1; 8+ HD, as the base creature +2

Treasure: Same as the base creature

Alignment: Same as the base creature

Advancement: Same as the base creature

APPENDIX II

PSEUDOLEVIATHAN

Colossal Construct (Aquatic)
Hit Dice: 24d10 (132 hp)
Initiative: +0
Speed: Swim 40 ft.
AC: 23 (–8 size, +21 natural), touch 2, flat-footed 23
Base Attack/Grapple: +18/+50
Attack: Bite +25 melee, or tail slap +25 melee
Full Attack: Bite +25 melee and tail slap +20 melee
Damage: Bite 4d8+16, tail slap 4d6+16
Face/Reach: 20 ft. by 40 ft./10 ft.
Special Attacks: Frightful presence, gulp
Special Qualities: Blindsight 100 ft., cold resistance 25, construct traits, DR 20/+3
Saves: Fort +8, Ref +8, Will +9
Abilities: Str 43, Dex 10, Con —, Int —, Wis 13, Cha 14
Climate/Terrain: Any aquatic
Organization: Solitary
Challenge Rating: 14
Treasure: Double standard plus *leviathan heart*
Alignment: Always neutral
Advancement: 25–72 HD (Colossal)

A pseudoleviathan is an ocean-going construct manufactured as a shrine to Obad-Hai. Often, the creature's creator lives within it for long periods, using it to travel the world's oceans and study the creatures of the depths.

A pseudoleviathan is made to resemble an ancient, extremely rare sea creature. It resembles an immense sturgeon with a long, tooth-filled snout much like a crocodile's. Its body, which is typically more than 140 feet in length, is constructed from the remains of thousands of sea creatures.

Passengers ride in a cubical chamber approximately 10 feet on a side, located in the construct's head. Creatures within the chamber can see out through the pseudoleviathan's eyes as through they were portholes. Hatches in the top of the head lead outside, and hatches below lead to the creature's cavernous stomach. The pseudoleviathan holds only a limited amount of air in its head and belly. A Medium creature can breathe comfortably inside the head for only about 6 hours. The stomach is always flooded, but an air pocket about 5 feet high that extends the length of the stomach allows four Medium creatures to breathe for 1 hour. (For each air-breather beyond four, deduct 5 minutes from the air supply.) The construct can replenish the air inside its head and belly by surfacing for 1 minute and exchanging air through a hole that opens in the top of its head.

COMBAT

In combat, a pseudoleviathan bites with its powerful jaws and tries to swallow opponents with its gulp ability. It can also slap with its immense tail.

Blindsight (Ex): A pseudoleviathan can ascertain its sur-

roundings by nonvisual means (mostly hearing and scent, but also by noticing vibration and other environmental clues). This ability enables it to discern objects and creatures within 100 feet. The pseudoleviathan usually does not need to make Listen or Spot checks to notice creatures within range of its blindsight.

Construct Traits: A pseudoleviathan is immune to mind-affecting effects, poison, *sleep*, paralysis, stunning, disease, death effects, necromantic effects, and any effect that requires a Fortitude save unless it also works on objects. The creature is not subject to critical hits, subdual damage, ability damage, ability drain, energy drain, or death from massive damage. It cannot heal itself but can be healed through repair. It cannot be raised or resurrected. A pseudoleviathan has darkvision (60-foot range).

Frightful Presence (Ex): When a pseudoleviathan charges or attacks, it inspires terror in all creatures within 30 feet that have fewer Hit Dice or levels than it has. Each potentially affected opponent must succeed at a Will save (DC 24) or become frightened for 5d6 rounds. A successful save leaves that opponent immune to that pseudoleviathan's frightful presence for 24 hours.

Gulp (Ex): A pseudoleviathan can swallow a Huge or smaller creature or object by making a successful bite attack. The monster's interior contains a mass of surging water. Each swallowed creature must make a Swim check (DC 15) every round. Success means the swallowed creature takes 1d3 points of subdual damage but can attack the pseudoleviathan from inside with any weapon other than a bow or crossbow. Failure means the swallowed creature takes 1d6 points of subdual damage and must immediately make a second Swim check (DC 15) to avoid going underwater and starting to drown. Objects swallowed automatically take 1d6 points of damage and might begin to take on water or begin to sink. Anyone attacking the pseudoleviathan from inside hits automatically. If the pseudoleviathan takes 50 points of damage from the inside, it disgorges the entire contents of its stomach, which takes 5 rounds, during which time the water inside is treated as stormy. The wearer of the *amulet of pseudoleviathan command* can prevent the pseudoleviathan from disgorging, and it can also force the pseudoleviathan to gulp creatures or objects without dealing any damage to them, although creatures must still make a Swim check (DC 15) on being gulped or risk drowning. Creatures using a boat or other flotation device who are swallowed by a pseudoleviathan must make a Profession (pilot) or Balance check (DC 15) on being swallowed or be thrown overboard, forcing the Swim checks described above.

CONSTRUCTION

A pseudoleviathan's body is made from the amalgamated mass of thousands of sea creatures' remains (both animals and plants—approximately 200 tons worth) scavenged from the sea bottom over many years. The construct costs 175,000 gp to create, which includes 30,000 for the *amulet of pseudoleviathan command*, 60,000 for the *leviathan heart, and 8,500 gp for the body.* Assembling the body requires a successful Craft (leatherworking) or Craft (armorsmithing) check (DC 20).

The creator must be at least 18th level and able to cast divine spells. Completing the ritual drains 3,000 XP from the creator and requires casting the spells *sympathy, awaken, hallow, reincarnate,* and *commune with nature.*

MINION OF CHAOS

Gargantuan Outsider
Hit Dice: 35d8+245 (402 hp)
Initiative: +7
Speed: 40 ft., swim 20 ft.
AC: 39 (–4 size, +3 Dex, +30 natural), touch 9, flat-footed 36
Base Attack/Grapple: +35/+59
Attack: Bite +42 melee, or tentacle rake +42 melee, or stamp +42 melee
Full Attack: Bite +42 melee and 14 tentacle rakes +40 melee and 5 stamps +40 melee
Damage: Bite 4d6+12, tentacle rakes 2d6+6, stamps 2d8+6
Face/Reach: 15 ft. by 15 ft./30 ft. (tentacles)
Special Attacks: Energy drain, frightful presence, improved grab, paralysis rays, spell-like abilities, swallow whole
Special Qualities: Alien mind, blindsight 200 ft., DR 30/+5, immunities (acid, cold, electricity, fire, poison), outsider traits, protective aura, regeneration 30, SR 35
Saves: Fort +26, Ref +22, Will +22
Abilities: Str 34, Dex 17, Con 24, Int 15, Wis 17, Cha 24
Skills: Bluff +22, Concentration +45, Diplomacy +13, Hide +5, Intimidate +47, Knowledge (arcana) +22, Knowledge (the planes) +24, Listen +43, Move Silently +16, Search +40, Sense Motive +41, Spellcraft +40, Spot +43, Swim +20
Feats: Alertness, Blind-Fight, Cleave, Dodge, Great Cleave, Improved Initiative, Mobility, Multiattack, Power Attack.
Climate/Terrain: Any
Organization: Solitary, pair, or gang (3–4)
Challenge Rating: 20
Treasure: Standard
Alignment: Always chaotic neutral
Advancement: 36–70 HD (Gargantuan), 71–105 HD (Colossal)

Minions of chaos serve the Lords of Outer Chaos, a group of elder deific beings who dwell in the Far Realms. The Lords of Outer Chaos were defeated millennia ago and exiled from the Material Plane, but they are still occasionally worshiped in secret ceremonies by individuals or groups who seek to bring back their reign. Their minions have an unquenchable appetite for souls, which their masters use to increase their power.

From a distance, a minion of chaos resembles a monstrously large, black oak tree, but the "trunk" is actually five thick legs, and the "branches" are a writhing mass of tentacles covered in a confusion of barbs, suckers, and tiny mouths. Its maw is located on the top of its body.

For its size, a minion of chaos is remarkably agile and quiet when it wishes to be, although this is not often.

COMBAT

A minion of chaos typically paralyzes victims with its paralysis rays, then scoops them up in its tentacles to swallow them. It can also wreak havoc from a distance with its spell-like abilities, but it typically does this only to soften up opposition because it prefers to swallow live opponents.

Energy Drain (Su): Any living creature struck by a minion's tentacle attack must succeed at a Fortitude saving throw (DC 34) or gain 1d2 negative levels. For each negative level bestowed, the minion heals 5 points of damage. If the amount of healing is more than the damage the creature has taken, it gains any excess as temporary hit points. If the negative level has not been removed (with a spell such as *restoration*) before 24 hours have passed, the afflicted opponent must succeed at a Fortitude save (DC 34) to remove it. Temporary hit points gained from this ability remain for 1 hour.

Frightful Presence (Ex): When a minion of chaos charges or attacks, it inspires terror in all creatures within 30 feet that have fewer Hit Dice or levels than it has. Each potentially affected opponent must succeed at a Will save (DC 34) or become frightened for 5d6 rounds. A successful save leaves that opponent immune to that minion's frightful presence for 24 hours.

Improved Grab (Ex): If a minion of chaos hits an opponent that is at least one size category smaller then itself with a tentacle rake attack, it deals normal damage and attempts to start a grapple as a free action without provoking an attack of opportunity (grapple bonus +59). If it gets a hold, it transfers the opponent to its mouth as a free action and automatically hits with its bite attack in the same round. It can then try to swallow its prey in the next round. Alternatively, the minion of chaos has the opportunity to conduct the grapple normally, or simply use its tentacle to hold the opponent (–20 penalty on grapple check, but the minion of chaos is not considered grappled). In either case, each successful grapple check it makes during successive rounds automatically deals bite damage.

Paralysis Rays (Su): A minion of chaos can produce 1d4 paralysis rays per round. Each ray is 100 feet long and can be directed at a single target (+33 ranged touch). Anyone hit by a paralysis ray must succeed at a Fortitude save (DC 34) or be paralyzed for 2d8+4 minutes.

Spell-Like Abilities (Sp): At will—*chaos hammer, confusion, death knell, deeper darkness, feeblemind, insanity, unholy aura, unholy blight*; 1/day—*cloudkill, creeping doom, horrid wilting*. Caster level 20th; base save DC = 17 + spell level.

Swallow Whole (Ex): A minion of chaos can swallow a creature that is at least two size categories smaller than itself by making a successful grapple check (grapple bonus +59), provided that the opponent is already in its mouth at the start of its turn. Once inside the minion, the opponent takes 2d8+12 points of bludgeoning damage plus 2d8 points of acid damage and 1d3 negative levels per round from the creature's gullet. A successful grapple check allows the swallowed creature to climb out of the gullet and return to the minion's mouth, where another successful grapple check is required to get free. Alternatively, a swallowed creature can try to cut its way out with either claws or a light piercing or slashing weapon. Dealing at least 50 points of damage to the gullet (AC 25) in this way creates an opening large enough to permit escape. Once a single swallowed creature exits, muscular action closes the hole; thus, another swallowed opponent must cut its own way out. A Gargantuan minion's gullet can hold 2 Huge, 8 Large, 32 Medium, or 128 Small or smaller creatures.

Alien Mind (Su): While a minion of chaos is not immune to mental attacks, anyone targeting it with a mind-affecting or telepathic effect makes direct contact with its utterly alien mind. The attacker must make a successful Will save (DC 34) or take 1d4+1 points of Wisdom damage. An attacker is subject to Wisdom damage on every attempt, whether the attack is successful or not.

Blindsight (Ex): A minion of chaos emits high-frequency sounds, inaudible to most other creatures, that bounce off nearby objects and creatures. This ability enables it to discern objects and creatures within 200 feet. The minion usually does not need to make Spot or Listen checks to notice creatures within range of its blindsight. A *silence* spell negates this ability and forces the minion to rely on its vision.

Outsider Traits: A minion of chaos has darkvision (60-foot range). It cannot be raised or resurrected.

Protective Aura (Su): A minion of chaos is constantly surrounded by effects that duplicate those of the *magic circle against law* spell (caster level 20th). The effect can be dispelled, but the minion can create it again during its next turn as a free action.

Regeneration (Su): A minion of chaos takes normal damage from holy, unholy, and lawful weapons. Ω

Peter Aperlo's credits include being a naval officer (Gulf War, Episode I), *an archaeologist* (Raiders of the Lost Flint), *and too many other roles to list. He currently performs as a freelance author and screenwriter in Los Angeles, much to his wife's joy.*

Wayne Reynolds

Map of Mystery

Githzerai Monastery

1 square = 10 feet

WEST

MOUNT ZOGON
TODAY IS A BIG DAY FOR YOU, GALEENA. TODAY YOU DEPART OUR SECRET DRUIDIC SCHOOL FOREVER ... TO VENTURE FORTH INTO THE VAST, VERDANT WILDERNESS—A DRUID—NEVER TO RETURN. NO MATTER WHAT.
I'M A DRUID? ALREADY? I EXPECTED TO BE HERE AT LEAST UNTIL I HAD—
BYE. WATCH OUT FOR SNAKES.
REMEMBER ME POISONING BARRY FIRFOOT THIS MORNING? DO YOU THINK THAT HAD ANYTHING TO DO WITH MY SUDDEN GRADUATION?
YES.
COOL! I KNEW IT WAS A GOOD IDEA!
TONYM ©2003

BY TONY MOSELEY

PREVIEWS

DUNGEON #100

The 100th issue of *Dungeon Magazine* is here. Launched as the consummate D&D adventure magazine in 1986, *Dungeon* has become the ultimate DMs supplement. This issue will also be the first to feature the revised 3rd Edition rules. Issue #100 will feature a sampling of all the best *Dungeon* has to offer, including:

Incursion: The Lich Queen's Beloved: By Christopher Perkins. The massive crossover event will finally arrive. Written by *Dungeon*'s most prolific author, "The Lich Queen's Beloved" anchors this landmark issue. See page 52 of this issue for details.

Old Embers Never Die: By Andy Collins. The designer behind the revised *Player's Handbook* brings one of *Dungeon*'s most memorable villains back to the pages of the magazine. The cover subject of issue #1, Flame, the powerful red dragon featured in that issue's "Into the Fire" and issue #17's "Out of the Ashes" returns to his lair in the Western Mountains, hungry for blood and treasure. A D&D adventure for four 12th-level PCs.

Woe to Mistledale: By Skip Williams. This sequel to issue #87's "Raiders of Galath's Roost" takes the PCs back to the Dales region of the Forgotten Realms. Someone—whether drow, the local elves, or another force entirely—has taken up residence in the forests near Mistledale, disrupting trade along the Moonsea Ride and slaughtering merchants. The PCs must embark on a convoluted investigation to uncover the mystery behind the attacks. A D&D Forgotten Realms adventure for four 8th-level PCs.

Beast of Burden: By Michael Kortes. Some massive creature has appeared from the wilds, stalking and destroying entire villages. That alone would have the region in an uproar, but the fact that an organized army seems to live on the creature's back, raining destruction on villagers and the land alike. The PCs must catch the mysterious beast and stop the marauders living atop it before they reach a major city. A D&D adventure for four 6th-level PCs.

Plus, Critical Threats by Jonathan Tweet, Monte Cook, Rich Baker, and Peter Adkison, a new "Map of Mystery," and an editorial retrospective and timeline looking back at *Dungeon* #1–100.

DRAGON #309 WAR

Campaign Components: Incursion: By James Wyatt. You've defeated dungeons. You've slain dragons. You've become a hero. The githyanki don't care; they're going to kill you anyway. The githyanki incursion begins next month. For more information on this three-magazine event, check out page 52.

A History of War: By Dean Poisso. A look at the evolution of weapons and tactics with an eye toward the D&D rules, with plenty of ideas for your campaign or your character.

The Art of D&D: By Dean Poisso. If you would conquer, you must know your enemy better than he knows himself. Applying the principles of Sun Tzu's classic *The Art of War* to D&D combats.

Beasts of War: By Andy Collins. Living engines of destruction, these fearsome creatures work with armies, crushing those who oppose them. Few things can turn the tide of battle faster than a properly trained beast of war.

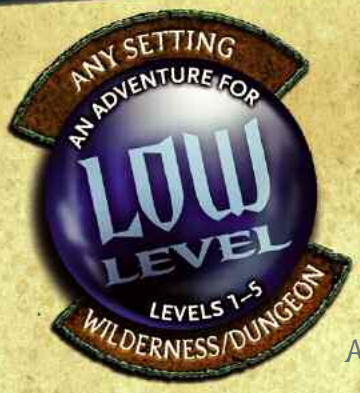
War Spells: By Sean Reynolds. Devastating spells that can clear an entire battlefield, these spells of war were designed with large confrontations in mind. Each spell affects an aspect of war, and many affect massive areas of the battlefield. Living through your next battle might depend on knowing what these spells can do. Ω

Temple of Boccob

Map of Mystery

KEY

1. Main Entrance
2. Foyers
3. Main Antechamber
4. Mystical Gathering Chamber
5. Pulpits
6. Vestibule
7. Reagent Storage Rooms
8. Main Gallery
9. Acolyte Quarters
10. East Gallery
11. West Gallery
12. Magical Laboratories
13. Private Shrines
14. Dining Hall
15. High Priest's Quarters
16. High Priest's Private Study
17. Private Reading Rooms
18. Arcane Library



FISH STORY

BY ADAM JORTNER

ARTWORK BY PETER BERGTING • CARTOGRAPHY BY SEAN GLENN

Magic Items Monsters NPCs Objects Settlements Traps

"Fish Story" is a D&D adventure suitable for four 5th-level player characters. Consult the "Scaling the Adventure" sidebar for ways to modify the scenario for higher or lower levels of play. PCs should accumulate enough experience points to gain one level by the adventure's end.

Characters with ranks in Diplomacy (bards and paladins especially) are recommended, since negotiation is required at several points. This adventure can take place near any shallow river in a temperate zone. In the World of Greyhawk, the setting is on a tributary of the Franz River.

BACKGROUND

The late wizard Kinokuniya had a soft spot for his hometown of Waterford, so when a severe drought struck the area some two hundred years ago, he returned from Brotton bent on saving his village. Kinokuniya decided that the way to deal with the drought was to permanently raise the water level of Murky Pond, the lake that provided the town and the surrounding area with water. To that end, he summoned a Large water elemental and bound it to the lake. Using the hedged prison version of *binding*, he confined the elemental (whose name was Rchkch) to Murky Pond for "as long as there was a soul in Waterford." Kinokuniya also created a small hole between the planes, working the *binding* so Rchkch could pull more water in to the pond to fill it to a useful level, but not allowing the elemental to overflow the town. To placate Rchkch (and convince the elemental to pull the water through as needed), who foresaw centuries of loneliness, the wizard promised that he would summon other water creatures to the lake to keep the elemental company. Kinokuniya never intended to fulfill that promise, figuring that other intelligent water creatures in the lake would only make life more difficult for those living in Waterford.

Kinokuniya built a small retreat for himself in the caverns beneath the lake, and he often used it to work or meditate when he visited his hometown. He even built himself a sarcophagus in one of its chambers, intending to return here to die when his time came. Eventually, the caverns did indeed become his tomb, just as he had planned.

Eighty years later, the rains returned to the region. The rainwater, on top of the water provided by the elemental, flooded all of Waterford. Unaware of the lake's nature and unable to reverse Kinokuniya's magic, the residents migrated to the nearby town of Spate's Grove. They granted the use of Waterford to a tribe of locathahs in perpetuity in exchange for military support in times of need. The locathahs never understood the lake's nature either, and they never encountered the elemental because it was sequestered within the hedged prison that the wizard had created at the bottom of the lake to hold it. Thus, Rchkch was never able to enjoy the company of the locathahs, even though, as Aquan-speaking creatures, they could have eased his loneliness.

Two years ago (twenty years after the tribe settled in Waterford), a strange locathah named Oosah arrived in Waterford and offered his services as a potion-maker to the tribe. The chief of the locathahs accepted his offer, but Oosah had his own agenda. His presence in Waterford was no accident—he had come in search of Kinokuniya's secrets. After months of searching and spellcasting, Oosah cast *detect thoughts* at the bottom of Murky Pond and discovered an intelligence there—Rchkch. Another week of divination produced the creature's name and nature, as well as the location of Kinokuniya's tomb. Certain that he was finally on the trail of the dead wizard's secrets, the wily locathah entered the tomb and was promptly killed by a well-placed trap.

But Oosah was a tenacious fellow, and his spirit returned as a ghost determined to complete his quest. Using his new powers, he explored the tomb thoroughly but did not find the object of his search—a means by which he could enslave Rchkch and bend the elemental to his will. Stymied, he tried to command the locathahs, but he succeeded only in slaying some of them. The terrified locathahs fled to Spate's Grove, where they seized a river mill and demanded that the town elders take action. Since Oosah was the only remaining locathah who could speak Common, the people of Spate's Grove could not understand the demand.

In Spate's Grove, the town guards are flummoxed. In Murky Pond, Rchkch eagerly anticipates freedom, since there is now only one "soul" remaining in Waterford: Oosah. And in Waterford, Oosah plots to take over the lake as soon as he can discover a means to control the elemental.

ADVENTURE SYNOPSIS

The PCs arrive in Spate's Grove on other business, but they find the town deserted. All the citizens are at the riverside, watching the town leaders quarrel over what to do about the

locathahs. Eventually, someone notices the PCs and asks for their assistance.

Through battle, magic, or wordplay, the PCs discover the reason behind the locathahs' hostility. The fishfolk now claim Spate's Grove on the strength of a decades-old agreement, since their former town of Waterford has been rendered uninhabitable by Oosah's haunting. If the PCs could get rid of Oosah, the locathahs could return to Waterford.

The party travels to Waterford and confronts Oosah. He feigns compliance, hoping that the PCs have some magic that can help him seize control of the elemental. After confronting the guardians of the tomb, the PCs learn the true nature of the lake. They must then decide whether to free Rchkch or keep him trapped for the benefit of the locathahs. The PCs must also deal with Oosah once the ghost realizes that the PCs pose a threat to his dream of controlling Rchkch.

ADVENTURE HOOKS

The PCs should arrive in Spate's Grove no later than the morning after the locathahs seize the mill. You can choose from among the following adventure hooks to get the PCs involved, or use them to inspire your own backstory.

- The PCs have discovered a reference to an intriguing magic item known as the headband of Kinokuniya in an arcane tomb or scroll. Research has revealed that Kinokuniya was a wizard who disappeared more than a century ago. The world's expert on Kinokuniya is Abo Serra, a historian living in Spate's Grove.
- The PCs need a way to end a drought or flood in another area. They have come in search of the fabled hidden laboratory of Kinokuniya, a wizard native to this area who was known for his ability to manipulate water.

Spate's Grove (small town): Conventional; AL LN; 1,200-gp limit; Assets 66,000 gp; Population 1,100; Mixed (human 70%, gnome 18%, halfling 8%, dwarf 1%, elf 1%, half-elf 1%, half-orc 1%).

Authority Figures: Mayor Czen Reni, female human Brd2/Ari2; Harvest Cleverbrawl, female gnome Ftr2/Rng2 (guard captain).

Important Characters: Tollie Coppers, male halfling Exp4/Rog2 (prosperous merchant), Abo Serra, female human Exp5/Wiz1 (town historian).

Others: Town guards, War1 (×30, 20 currently injured), Priest, Clr4 (Pelor), Acolytes, Clr1 (Pelor, ×4), Brd2 (2), Exp3 (8), Exp2 (12), Rog1 (6), Wiz1 (2), Com1 (1,031).

Notes: In the time of Kinokuniya, kobolds led by the legendary Retiss-Abbas once stormed the outlying gnome warrens near Spate's Grove, forcing local gnomes into the town. This event accounts for the town's high gnome population.

STANDOFF AT THE MILL

A small river known as Poverty Creek flows from Murky Pond past the town of Spate's Grove, forming its northern border. A broad dirt road approaches the creek from the south and terminates at the gate to Spate's Grove. Pepper farms border the road, and the air is scented with their crops.

A 4-foot-high wall, built to fend off occasional kobold assaults, surrounds Spate's Grove. At the gate, the wall rises into a 10-foot-high arch, which is equipped with a gate and defensive fortifications that are usually manned by guards. The road passes under the arch, continues directly through the town square, and finally ends at the docks by the riverside. A mill, run by local merchant Tollie Coppers, is the only business directly on the river.

Gate and Trap (EL 1/2): When the PCs arrive, the gate is locked and the fortifications vacant because all the soldiers have been called to the mill. The PCs must circumvent the gate to get into Spate's Grove. The short wall is easy to climb (Climb, DC 10), but shards of glass have been embedded in the mortar as further kobold deterrence.

Stout Wooden Gate: 6 in. thick; Hardness 5; hp 60; break DC 20; Open Lock DC 25.

Embedded Glass Trap: CR 1/2; mechanical; location trigger; automatic reset; Reflex save (DC 12) avoids; no attack roll necessary (1d6, glass shards); Search (DC 15); Disable Device (DC 20).

Upon entering Spate's Grove, the PCs find rows of houses shut tight and no townsfolk in evidence. The whole place is eerily quiet and desolate. A successful Listen check (DC 5) allows a PC to hear shouting coming from the direction of the river. Continuing down the main road brings the characters to the site of the excitement: the grassy field in front of Tollie's mill.

The mill itself is plain and worn, and its windows are dark. A human and gnome female stand at close quarters on the field, screaming at one another. Wounded townsfolk form a circle around the two, watching with anxiety and fascination.

The human is Czen Reni, the mayor of Spate's Grove. She wears the dark green robes of a magistrate and shouts in a high, tinny voice. The gnome is the guard captain of Spate's Grove, Harvest Cleverbrawl. Scars run across her face and hands, and her cloak is filthy. A crossbow bolt juts out of her shoulder.

Harvest and Czen are busy exchanging a wealth of insults, and the PCs can easily get the gist of the argument if they bother to listen. Essentially, Czen blames Harvest for launching an ineffective raid, and Harvest blames Czen for being a blithering idiot.

If the PCs do not immediately intervene, a haggard but well-dressed halfling spots them. He approaches, bows, and addresses them as follows.

> "Good day and many more to you, fair-minded travelers. By your look, you are adventurers, just as our illustrious mayor and our battle-hardened guard captain were in their youth. I am Tollie Coppers, and I wonder if you might intervene in this matter and talk some sense into our leading citizens?"

If questioned, Tollie (male halfling Exp4/Rog2) explains that Czen and Harvest are currently arguing over the best way to

oust some uninvited guests from the town. Last night, a band of river locathahs attacked and seized Tollie's mill. Czen and Harvest, both former adventurers, disagreed from the start about the best approach to dislodging the invaders. In the end, each made an attempt and was rebuffed.

Czen tried to speak to the locathahs and impress them with her magic, but they responded by shouting something in their language (which no one understands) and shooting her with a crossbow bolt. (In fact, Czen attempted to cast a spell and the locathahs responded with force.)

Harvest and the militia then attempted to storm the mill, but the locathahs laid down such heavy fire from the windows that it proved impossible to get close. Twenty of the thirty militia members are now injured, and the local clerics have expended all their *cure* spells.

Since then, Czen and Harvest have fallen to arguing and both seem to have forgotten the fact that the locathahs are still bivouacked in Tollie's mill. Tollie begs the PCs to intervene. If the characters ask for payment, Tollie barters with them. He can go as high as 400 gp plus a share of next year's harvest.

THE ALTERCATION ON THE FIELD (EL 6)

On the basis of either Tollie's plea or their own good will, the PCs may try to stop the two women from fighting. Armed interference brings the wounded soldiers to the aid of the mayor and the guard captain. Otherwise, the soldiers and priests remain wary but they allow any PCs who seem to know what they're doing to handle the situation. It takes a successful Diplomacy check (DC 20) to get Harvest and Czen to stop their altercation.

Creatures: The intense rivalry between Czen and Harvest stems from their adventuring days. Both tend to exaggerate their accomplishments (which are, in truth, fairly minor).

Harvest Cleverbrawl, Female Gnome Rgr2/Ftr2: CR 4; Small Humanoid (3 ft. 3 in. tall); HD 2d10+6 plus 2d10+6; hp 34; Init +8; Spd 20 ft.; AC 19, touch 15, flat-footed 15; BAB +3; Grap +1; Atk +6 melee (1d6+2/19–20, masterwork short sword) and +6 melee (1d4+1/19–20, masterwork dagger), or +8 melee (1d6+3/19–20, masterwork short sword), or +9 ranged (1d6+2/crit ×3, masterwork mighty composite shortbow [+2 Str]); SA favored enemy (reptilian humanoids +1), two-weapon fighting ability; SQ gnome traits; AL LG; SV Fort +9, Ref +4, Will +2; Str 14, Dex 18, Con 16, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 8.

Skills: Climb +4, Gather Information +2, Listen +6†, Spot +4, Swim +4*, Wilderness Lore +4. *Feats:* Alertness, Dodge, Improved Initiative, Iron Will, Track.

*Includes –1 penalty for weight of gear carried.

†Includes +2 racial bonus to Listen checks.

Possessions: Mithral shirt, masterwork short sword, masterwork dagger, masterwork mighty composite shortbow [+2 Str] with 4 arrows.

Czen Reni, Female Human Ari2/Brd2: CR 4; Medium Humanoid (5 ft. 1 in. tall); HD 2d8–2 plus 2d6–2; hp 12; Init +2; Spd 30 ft.; AC 12, touch 12, flat-footed 10; BAB +2; Grap +1; Atk +2 melee (1d8–1/19–20, masterwork longsword); SA bardic music (countersong, fascinate, inspire competence, inspire courage) 2/day, spells; SQ bardic knowledge; AL NG; SV Fort –1, Ref +5, Will +6; Str 8, Dex 14, Con 8, Int 13, Wis 10, Cha 16.

Skills: Appraise +7, Diplomacy +8, Knowledge (local) +5, Listen +6, Perform (acting, ballad, comedy, dance, epic, mime) +9, Profession (magistrate) +6, Spellcraft +3, Spot +3, Tumble +6. *Feats:* Expertise, Improved Disarm, Run.

Bard Spells Known (3/1; base save DC = 13 + spell level): 0—*light, mending, open/close, prestidigitation*, resistance;* 1st—*charm person*, erase.*

*Already cast during Czen's first attempt at diplomacy.

Possessions: Masterwork longsword, wand of *detect magic* (7 charges), noble's outfit, silver pendant of office (175 gp), 3 gold rings (100 gp each).

SCALING THE ADVENTURE

"Fish Story" is designed for four 5th-level characters, but it can be modified for parties of different levels. The standoff at the mill can be adjusted by making the locathahs either more or less open to negotiation. For lower-level parties, make the Diplomacy DCs easier, or have Quee challenge the party to fight her alone. (Consider her defeat to be a successful "negotiation.") For higher-level parties, remove the binding goblet altogether, forcing the party to rely on its own magical prowess to solve the problem of the elemental.

Also consider the following adaptations:

- **3rd- to 4th-level PCs:** Make Quee a Bbn3 and Oosah a Clr5. In Waterford, remove one violet fungus from area **W2** and one Large zombie from area **W5**. Add potions of water breathing to area **W6**. In the tomb, remove one tojanida from area **T2** and two animated brass chairs from area **T3**. Either make Retiss-Abbas an advanced mummy or remove him altogether.
- **6th- to 7th-level PCs:** Add a locathah Clr5 to Quee's warband. Make Oosah a Clr8. Replace the violet fungi in area **W2** with a black pudding. Add another tojanida to area **T2** and an animated table and rug (both Large) to area **T3**. Make Retiss-Abbas a Rng4/Sor3 and allow him to use his domination ability freely.
- **8th- to 9th-level PCs:** Make Quee a Bbn7 and Oosah a Clr10. In addition to the changes in the paragraph above, add a locathah Ftr5 to Quee's warband and make the tojanidas in area **T2** adult or elder. Add traps that employ deadlier spells, such as *greater dispelling, chain lightning,* or *flesh to stone*. Make Rchkch a Huge water elemental. Make Retiss-Abbas a Rng6/Sor6.

Remember that changing the Encounter Levels should raise the amount of treasure in the adventure. Consult page 170 in the *Dungeon Master's Guide* (**Tables 7–2**, **7–3**, and **7–4**) to determine treasure appropriate to the new encounters.

Development: Neither Czen nor Harvest knows why the locathahs have come, but both women know the following background information and are willing to provide it in answer to appropriate questions.

- The locathahs normally live in the abandoned human village of Waterford, twenty miles upriver. That area was ceded to them decades ago by the people of this town, who migrated here from Waterford when Murky Pond flooded.
- The locathahs have been good neighbors thus far. Their warriors patrol the river whenever kobold activity is high.
- The locathahs just moved into the mill and began making demands in their own tongue, which no one here understands. The citizens sent for a translator to help them communicate with the locathahs, but he's out of town. Oddly, the locathahs have not pressed the attack, and no one has been killed yet.

Harvest is more than happy to let the PCs try an assault. She is of the opinion that a small, stealthy force might succeed where she and her troops failed. She offers her personal assistance but refuses to put any of her soldiers under the PCs' command.

Czen, on the other hand, argues vehemently for a second attempt at negotiation. Of course, she wants to be the lead negotiator and refuses to allow the PCs to attempt talks without her. A successful Diplomacy or Bluff check (DC 15) is required to persuade her that someone else should lead the negotiations. If the PCs press for payment, Czen promises them 200 gp from the town's treasury if they can expel the locathahs.

INVESTIGATION

The PCs might wish to learn more about their mission before setting out to deal with the locathahs. If the characters indicate such a desire, Czen points out Abo Serra, the town historian. Abo can provide any of the information on the table below in answer to PC questions for a total fee of 80 gp.

The PCs can also ask around among the other townsfolk gathered at the river and gain the information below via successful Gather Information or bardic knowledge checks.

Check Result	Information Gleaned
5	Waterford's most famous son was the wizard Kinokuniya, who saved Spate's Grove from the kobolds more than two hundred years ago.
10	Waterford's families moved to Spate's Grove when the lake levels on Murky Pond rose suddenly.
15	Kinokuniya saved Waterford from drought by adding water to Murky Pond.
17	The kobold commander that Kinokuniya defeated was named Retiss-Abbas. He was a fearsome warrior with great powers. He destroyed most of the gnome warrens in the area before trying to wipe out the humans.
20	Kinokuniya supposedly lived in his hometown of Waterford for most of his life, but no one has ever discovered exactly where his residence was.
25	Legend has it that Retiss-Abbas was not destroyed, but merely imprisoned somewhere.
35	Locathahs eschew wizardry, so their occupation of Waterford has undoubtedly covered up any of Kinokuniya's secrets that remain in the area.
(Serra only)	Serra visited Waterford many years ago seeking evidence of Kinokuniya's dwelling, but she found nothing definite and the fishfolk frightened her away. However, the geography of the place suggests that a cavern system may exist beneath the lake.

THE MILL

The mill is a one-story structure measuring 35 feet by 40 feet. Two long docks provide access to Poverty Creek. The small boats normally moored there have been smashed to pieces by the locathahs for use as cover. The front of the mill has a door and four small windows; the opposite side is open to the river.

Pine Walls and Dock: 1 in. thick; Hardness 5; hp 10; break DC 20.

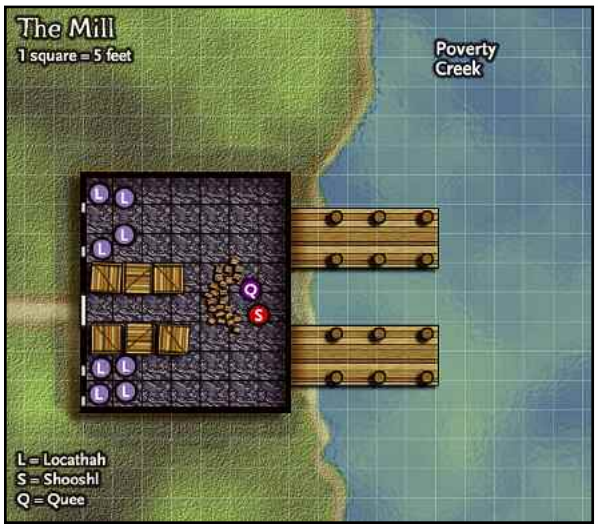
The PCs can try either the Negotiation Option or the Combat Option (see below) at any time. If one fails to work, they can attempt the other.

THE NEGOTIATION OPTION (EL 6)

PCs who approach the mill without announcing themselves are attacked. If they make some effort to indicate peaceful intent, a tattooed, purple-skinned locathah appears at the window. This is the tribal storyteller, Shooshl. To convince her to parley, the PCs must make a successful Diplomacy check (base DC 25, plus modifiers according to the table below).

Condition	Diplomacy DC modifier
PC speaks Aquan	–2 per PC
Party displays the holy symbol of a nature god	–2 per symbol
Party lays down weapons unasked	–5
Party offers gifts to the locathahs	–1 per 100 gp of gift
Party attacks the locathahs	+5 per attempt
Each locathah killed by the party	+10 per locathah

If the PCs succeed at the check and also lay down their arms, they are allowed to approach and enter. If they succeed at the Diplomacy check but have not yet laid down their weapons, Shooshl makes gestures to indicate that they should.



Creatures: If Shooshl admits the PCs, two locathahs meet them at the door and lead them to the chieftain, Quee. Shooshl has preceded them to Quee's makeshift audience chamber.

Quee, Female Locathah Bbn5: CR 5; Medium Humanoid (aquatic, 5 ft. 7 in. tall); HD 2d8+4 plus 5d12+10; hp 55; Init +3; Spd 20 ft., swim 60 ft.; AC 19, touch 13, flat-footed 19; BAB +6; Grap +9; Atk +10/+5 melee (1d8+3, masterwork trident), or +9 ranged (1d8/19–20, light crossbow); SQ fast movement, rage 2/day, uncanny dodge (Dex bonus to AC, can't be flanked); AL CN; SV Fort +9, Ref +4, Will +4; Str 16, Dex 16, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 9.

Skills: Craft (trapmaking) +2, Intimidate +6, Listen +9, Search +2, Spot +4, Wilderness Lore +5. *Feats:* Blind-Fight, Iron Will, Power Attack.

Rage (Ex): While she rages, Quee's statistics change as follows: HD 2d8+8 plus 5d12+20; hp 69; AC 17, touch 11, flat-footed 17; Atk +12/+7 melee (1d8+5, masterwork trident), or +9 ranged (1d8/19–20, light crossbow); SV Fort +8, Will +6. Her rage lasts for 7 rounds.

Language: Aquan.

Possessions: Spined shield, masterwork trident, light crossbow with 10 bolts, *potion of cure light wounds*, string of pearls (70 gp).

Shooshl, Female Locathah Brd3: CR 3; Medium Humanoid (aquatic; 5 ft. 4 in. tall); HD 2d8 plus 3d6; hp 19; Init +2; Spd 10 ft., swim 60 ft.; AC 17, touch 12, flat-footed 15; BAB +3; Grap +2; Atk +3 melee (1d6–1/×3, masterwork halfspear), or +5 ranged (1d8/19–20, light crossbow); SA bardic music (countersong, *fascinate*, inspire courage) 3/day, spells; SQ bardic knowledge; AL N; SV Fort +1, Ref +8, Will +5; Str 8, Dex 15, Con 10, Int 14, Wis 14, Cha 16.

Skills: Bluff +6, Concentration +4, Craft (cooking) +4, Diplomacy +6, Listen +5, Perform (dance, epic, song, storytelling) +9, Sense Motive +6, Spot +5. *Feats:* Blind-Fight, Skill Focus (Perform).

Bard Spells Known (3/2; base save DC = 13 + spell level; 15% chance of arcane spell failure): 0—*daze, detect magic, ghost sound, light, mage hand, open/close*; 1st—*cure light wounds, hypnotism, sleep.*

Languages: Aquan, Auran, Sylvan.

Possessions: Masterwork large wooden shield, masterwork halfspear, light crossbow with 10 bolts, *potion of remove paralysis.*

Locathahs (2): hp 9 each; *Monster Manual* 129.

These creatures are river locathahs. River locathahs can survive outside water for 1 hour per point of Constitution. They are otherwise identical to the locathahs described in the *Monster Manual.*

Development: At this point, PCs wishing to talk their way through the crisis must find a way to communicate with the locathahs. None of the ones at the mill speak Common, although Shooshl knows a couple of other languages. If a PC addresses the locathahs in Aquan, they are pleased and all begin talking at once. Otherwise, the characters can try other languages until they find one that Shooshl speaks. Alternatively, they can use magical means or attempt to communicate in pidgin Aquan (treat each communication as an Innuendo check at a –5 penalty against Shooshl's Sense Motive check result).

Quee speaks only through Shooshl, even if she can understand one or more of the PCs. Through Shooshl, Quee explains the locathahs' reasons for seizing the mill as follows.

> "Dozens of years ago, our ancestors entered an honorable agreement with the humans of Waterford. The humans gave us their town, which had sunk under Murky Pond, and we pledged to provide our warriors for their ongoing battle against the hated kobolds whenever needed.
>
> "But something evil now haunts the town and slays our people. Nothing can stay there. We have provided what was asked. But there is no longer a town for us to live in. We therefore claim the right to live here!"

A successful Sense Motive check against Shooshl's Bluff check result reveals that the locathahs are not so much belligerent as scared. If pressed, Shooshl admits that her people want the humans to return to Waterford and deal with the creature that has driven them out (Oosah's ghost). If the PCs offer to perform this service, Quee promises (through Shooshl) that the tribe will return to Waterford as soon as it is safe and repay Spate's Grove for any damage to the mill.

The locathahs can also offer the following information in response to specific PC questions.

POVERTY CREEK ENCOUNTERS

The area between Spate's Grove and Waterford is quiet, except when the resident kobolds are out and about. Once per day and twice per night, roll 1d10 and consult the following table. Each encounter except the one with the kobold hunting squadron should happen only once.

Roll	Encounter
1–5	No encounter
6	**Brown Bear:** hp 51; *Monster Manual* 193. (EL 4)
7	**Boars (2):** hp 22 each; *Monster Manual* 194. (EL 4)
8–10	**Kobold Hunters (12):** hp 2 each; *Monster Manual* 123. (EL 2)

- Three days ago, a spirit rose from Murky Pond. He looked like Oosah, the strange healer who lived in the stone circle. He uttered a terrible cry and turned his eyes upon the tribe. Several locathahs died on the spot; the others were stricken with terror and fled.
- Oosah was not like other locathahs. He arrived from another tribe only a couple of years ago, and he could talk with spirits and summon monsters from the air. The locathahs always avoided him because he was so odd. He was often seen exploring the woods and the lake, casting spells and taking measurements as if searching for something.
- The locathahs have heard legends about a human wizard who lived beneath the lake, but there are no caves there except for the nursery.

If the PCs have treated the locathahs with respect, Quee warns the party through Shooshl about the slimy doom in area **W3**. If they have not, she omits this information.

If the PCs don't undertake the quest, they must explain their reasons for refusing to a very displeased Czen and Harvest. Czen refuses to pay the PCs anything for their efforts until the locathahs go home. Harvest tries to shame the PCs into meeting the locathahs' demands, offering to accompany them on the journey if they're too scared.

Ad-hoc XP Award: If the PCs manage to deal with the locathahs without provoking a fight, award them experience for Quee and Shooshl as if they had overcome them in combat.

COMBAT OPTION: FRONTAL ASSAULT

This is the method that Harvest and her guards tried. Two locathahs are stationed at each window of the mill, and they open fire on anyone who comes within 50 feet without announcing a desire to parley. Each window provides one-half cover. The locathahs take turns attacking, one firing while the other reloads. Each has 8 bolts. The front door has been barred.

Front Door: 1 1/2 in. thick; Hardness 5; hp 20; break DC 23; Open Lock DC 25.

Within, the locathahs have fortified their positions. Stacks of crates force those entering through the front door down a 15-foot corridor.

Creatures: Two locathahs, plus Quee and Shooshl, have prepared to face the invaders. The two ordinary locathahs lie on top of the crates, which provide them with one-quarter cover.

Quee: See "The Mill," above.

Shooshl: See "The Mill," above.

Locathahs (2): hp 9 each; *Monster Manual* 129.

Trap: The crates on which the two locathahs are hiding are filled with pepper and can be pushed over with a successful Strength check (DC 20). Doing so causes the locathahs to fall, taking 1d6 points of damage each. The crates break open when they hit the floor and fill the room with a haze of pepper, causing those within 20 feet of any crate to cough and sneeze uncontrollably for 2d6 rounds.

Haze of Pepper Trap: CR 1/2; proximity trigger; no reset; Fortitude save (DC 20) avoids; no attack roll needed; each combatant within 20 ft. takes a –4 penalty on attack rolls; Search (N/A); Disable Device (N/A).

Tactics: The two locathahs atop the crates fire their crossbows at intruders as soon as they come within range. At the end of the makeshift corridor, Quee and Shooshl have piled a semicircle of debris 3 feet high that provides them with one-quarter cover. Quee fires spines from her *spined shield*, and Shooshl fires her crossbow.

Should the PCs get close enough to engage the leaders, Quee rages. Shooshl uses her bardic music to inspire courage in her allies while laying down cover fire. She breaks off combat and moves back to cure Quee or a nearby warrior as needed.

Development: If the locathahs are defeated but Quee survives, her sense of honor demands that she capitulate to her captors. However, she still refuses to go to Waterford. She makes her plea for the PCs to act just as if the PCs had succeeded at the Diplomacy check required in the negotiation option (see above). If Shooshl is no longer alive, Quee speaks directly to the PCs. If Quee dies, Shooshl and the remaining locathahs immediately surrender and beg the PCs to rid their town of its ghost.

Should the PCs lose, Quee and her followers strip them of valuables, attempt to kill any PCs who are not already dead, and dump the bodies outside the mill.

COMBAT: RIVER APPROACH

The locathahs have placed a single guard on the river side to watch for enemies approaching by water. Characters must swim the river or fly over it to reach the docks.

Creatures (EL 6): Quee, Shooshl, and five locathahs participate in the battle.

Quee: See "The Mill," above.

Shooshl: See "The Mill," above.

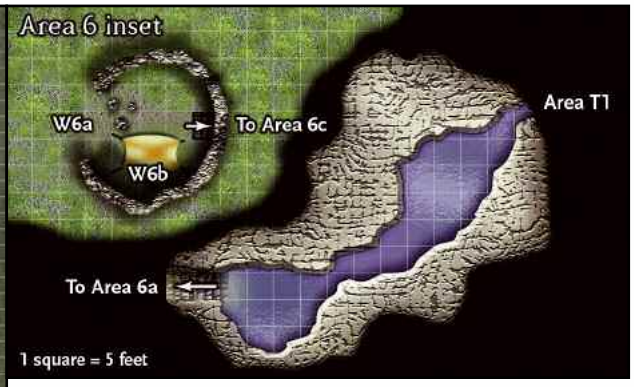
Locathahs (11): hp 9 each; *Monster Manual* 129.

Tactics: Should this guard discover the PCs (water imposes a –10 penalty on Move Silently checks), he shouts a warning to his fellows. After 1 round, Quee and five of the locathahs leap into the river to fight the PCs in the water, where the locathahs have a distinct advantage (see the "Fighting in Water" sidebar). As above, Quee rages and Shooshl uses her bardic music to inspire her allies.

Development: If all the locathahs involved in the defense are killed, the rest surrender and the PCs can search the mill. Beneath the western dock are ten juvenile locathahs (noncombatants, 1 hp each), huddled together on top of a sack of tribal goods (broken pottery, old fish, scrimshaw, and 65 gp).

FIGHTING IN WATER

See the *Player's Handbook,* page 74, for details on Swim checks. Also, apply the following conditions and modifiers to fights in or under the water: All underwater attacks made with slashing or bludgeoning weapons are made with a –2 penalty and at half damage, and all grapple checks are made at a –2 penalty underwater. Freedom of movement negates these penalties. Spells and spell-like abilities function normally, except those with the fire descriptor are ineffective underwater unless the caster makes a successful Spellcraft check (DC 15 + spell level). Thrown weapons are ineffectual underwater, and ranged weapons suffer a –2 penalty for each 5 feet of water they pass through.



JOURNEY TO MURKY POND

The "road" along Poverty Creek is simply a worn path. The flora is vivid along the trail, and the summer oaks are verdant and crawling with ivy.

Just east of Spate's Grove, the path climbs a 20-foot outcropping over which Poverty Creek tumbles in a small waterfall. Past the falls, the creek becomes shallow and swift—5 feet wide and about 3 feet deep. The rapids are minor but make boat traffic impossible. Some 20 miles down the road lies Waterford.

WATERFORD (AREA W)

When the PCs reach Waterford, read or paraphrase the following:

> At the crest of a small rise in the path, the forest flanking the creek opens up. Amid the draping greenery, Murky Pond spreads its brackish and stagnant fingers. Ancient ruins of houses line the shore, and the remains of peaked roofs peer out of the water. Beside the water on one side is a small ruined tower. The surrounding forest is lush with life, yet silent. Somehow, Murky Pond seems lonely.

Oosah the ghost has succeeded in frightening away every creature in the vicinity.

OOSAH (EL 8)

Oosah is in area **W6** when the party arrives, but if the PCs make a lot of noise—by fighting the fungi in the temple (area **W2**), poking around in the junk house (area **W3**), or the like—Oosah casts *undetectable alignment* on himself, then turns ethereal and shadows the group until he decides how to approach them.

Creature (EL 8): Oosah appears as a translucent locathah with intense, burning eyes. His misty outline gives the impression of a sunken, diseased frame, like that of a dried-out fish.

Oosah spent his whole life in search of power and knowledge. Various divinations led him to Waterford, where he passed himself off to the locals as a potion-brewer and visionary while seeking the great power that he knew was here. To maintain his cover, he occasionally cast a few protective spells over the tribe.

It had always been Oosah's intent to wrest control of the tribe from Quee when the time was right and rule a small aquatic fiefdom of his own. But after he discovered the true nature of Murky Pond and the presence of the elemental, Oosah set his aims even higher. He used *stone shape* to carve a path into Kinokuniya's tomb, hoping to find the ancient wizard's secrets. Instead, he died from a well-placed trap. When he rose again as a ghost, Oosah was delighted with the powers that his new form bestowed. He used them to explore the tomb and find out the general nature of the *binding* that held the elemental, although he was unable to discover the exact wording of the release clause. Currently, Oosah is puzzling out ways in which he might alter the *binding* to place Rchkch under his own control.

Oosah, Male Locathah Ghost Clr6 (no deity; against ethereal opponents): CR 8; Medium Undead (aquatic; 5 ft. 0 in. tall); HD 8d12; hp 52; Init +2; Spd 10 ft., swim 60 ft., fly 30 ft. (perfect); AC 18, touch 12, flat-footed 16; BAB +5; Grap +4; Atk +5 melee (1d6–1, masterwork club); SA corrupting gaze, frightful moan, rebuke undead 5/day, spells; SQ manifestation, rejuvenation, turn resistance +4, undead traits; AL NE; SV Fort +8, Ref +4, Will +8; Str 8, Dex 14, Con —, Int 14, Wis 16, Cha 14.

Skills: Alchemy +4, Bluff +4, Concentration +5, Craft (bookbinding) +4, Heal +4, Hide +9*†, Knowledge (arcana) +7, Knowledge (nature) +6, Knowledge (the planes) +4, Listen +14†, Search +10†, Spellcraft +5, Spot +14†. *Feats:* Blind-Fight, Brew Potion, Skill Focus (Bluff).

See the *Monster Manual* page 212 for ghost special attacks and qualities. Note that the save DC is 16 for Oosah's frightful moan and corrupting gaze abilities.

Cleric Spells Prepared (5/5/5/4; base save DC = 13 + spell level): 0—*detect magic, guidance, mending, read magic, resistance;* 1st—

bane, comprehend languages, doom, sanctuary, shield of faith*; 2nd—*augury, desecrate, detect thoughts*, hold person, undetectable alignment*; 3rd—*blindness/deafness, dispel magic, protection from elements, searing light.*

*Domain spell. *Domains:* Knowledge (cast divinations at +1 caster level; all Knowledge skills are cleric class skills), Protection (protective ward 1/day).

Languages: Aquan, Common, Draconic.

Possessions: +1 large wooden shield (in area **T1**), masterwork club (in area **T1**), potions (in area **W6b**).

Oosah, Male Locathah Ghost Clr 6 (no deity; manifested; against material opponents): CR 8; Medium Undead (aquatic, incorporeal; 5 ft. tall); HD 8d12; hp 52; Init +2; Spd fly 30 ft. (perfect); AC 17, touch 14, flat-footed 15; BAB +5; Grap +5; Atk —; SA corrupting gaze, frightful moan, rebuke undead 5/day, spells; SQ incorporeal subtype, manifestation, rejuvenation, turn resistance +4, undead traits; AL NE; SV Fort +8, Ref +4, Will +8; Str —, Dex 14, Con —, Int 14, Wis 16, Cha 14.

Skills:* Alchemy +4, Bluff +4, Concentration +5, Heal +4, Hide +10†, Knowledge (arcana) +7, Knowledge (nature) +6, Knowledge (the planes) +4, Listen +14†, Search +10†, Spellcraft +5, Spot +14†. *Feats:* Blind-Fight, Brew Potion, Skill Focus (Bluff).

*Includes –1 armor check penalty.

†Includes +8 racial bonus (ghost) to Hide, Listen, Search, and Spot checks.

Tactics: Once Oosah becomes aware of the PCs' presence, he follows them unobtrusively to assess their abilities. If they seem competent, or if he is detected, Oosah manifests and eagerly attempts to parley with them. Except where noted below, everything Oosah says during these negotiations is either an outright lie or a half-truth.

Oosah takes pains to portray himself as a simple knowledge seeker who has discovered something dangerous about the lake. (This statement is not an outright lie, but a successful Sense Motive check reveals that something about his story is not quite right.) If the PCs seem interested, the ghost readily provides information about the tomb's location and the *cone of cold* trap. He also reveals that the wizard who once lived in the caverns below the surface bound an elemental in the lake. All this information is true. Then, however, Oosah lies, explaining that he died trying to help his tribe and can't rest until the elemental is dealt with and Waterford is completely safe.

While he converses with the PCs, Oosah tries to pry as much information as possible out of them. He's particularly interested in what magic the characters have access to, and whether or not he could use that magic to control the elemental, although he does not reveal the reason behind his questions on that subject.

When he is satisfied that he knows all he needs to about the party, Oosah tells the PCs that the best way to make sure the elemental never rises again is to find some way of putting the creature under his control. He insists that only an immortal creature such as himself can guarantee the elemental's perpetual quiescence, and he promises to be a good caretaker. Of course, he really has every intention of using the elemental for his own benefit.

If they buy into this tale, Oosah helps the characters as long as he believes that they can help him. If he thinks they have outlasted their usefulness, he leads them to the tomb, hoping they will die there. He claims that he cannot go with them because he is unable to approach his own corpse. As soon as Oosah believes he is alone, he turns ethereal and begins tailing the party. A successful Knowledge (religion) or bardic knowledge check (DC 25) reveals that Oosah's claim about having to stay away from his corpse is untrue.

If at any point the PCs seem to be on the verge of discovering the real nature of the *binding*, or if they discuss freeing Rchkch, Oosah attacks. Under no circumstances does he allow anyone to free the elemental or reword the *binding* unless doing so obviously helps him. If he loses half of his hit points, Oosah becomes ethereal and returns to area **W6**. There he spontaneously casts *inflict* spells to cure himself and plots another strategy.

Development: Oosah doesn't know the exact wording of the *binding*, although he would like to discover it. In fact, Rchkch is commanded to remain in the lake "as long as there's a soul in Waterford." Currently, Oosah and the PCs are the only souls in Waterford. Rchkch is releases if the PCs kill Oosah and then leave Waterford. (Even though he begins rejuvenating almost immediately, there is at least a moment when he does not truly exist as a "soul.") If this occurs, proceed with the "Leaving Waterford" section below. Note that Oosah going ethereal doesn't trigger Rchkch's release, since Oosah's soul is technically still in an ethereal version of Waterford. But while he rejuvenates, his soul is temporarily discorporated and the *binding* can be lifted if the PCs then leave. Oosah's rejuvenation lasts for three days.

Ad-hoc XP Award: If the party defeats Oosah while in a flooded area of the tomb, add 25% to the experience award due to the difficulty of the encounter.

W1. RUINS

Crumbling stones draped with rotting timbers and lined with sawgrass mark a rectangle on the ground where the foundations of several structures once stood.

The ruins in these locations are broken-down houses of no use to the locathahs.

W2. TEMPLE (EL 5)

The limestone walls of this rectangular building are green with lichen. A remnant of a roof clings to the east wall, but the rest has fallen in. The west wall has collapsed.

This building once served as Waterford's inn, town hall, and temple. Within its remains, small ridges of stone indicate where walls once stood. Piles of junk—rusted metal chairs, detritus, animal droppings, and the like—lie in the corners. Yellow wildflowers and purple huckleberry coat the sunken flagstones on the "floor."

Creatures: After the locathahs fled, two predatory fungi arrived here.

Violet Fungi (2): hp 17, 15; *Monster Manual* 93.

Tactics: Once they detect the presence of food (the characters), the fungi attack. If the PCs flee, the fungi pursue.

Development: A successful Search check (DC 20) made while examining the junk piles reveals the temple's holy symbol: a tarnished but intact obsidian symbol of Pelor (50 gp).

W3. JUNK HOUSE (EL 3)

This house stores the locathahs' junk and refuse. Structurally intact, the door is closed and wedged shut with a heavy log. It smells slightly of rotting vegetation. Recently, the house has become infected with the disease known as slimy doom. When the locathahs discovered the situation, they propped the log against the door to prevent entry. Moving the log requires a successful Strength check (DC 20).

The interior of the house is filled with piles of broken stone tools, torn nets, shattered pottery, and other refuse. There is nothing of value here, but anyone poking around attracts Oosah's attention and is exposed to slimy doom.

Slimy Doom: CR 3; incubation period 1 day (1d4 points of Con damage/1 point of Con drain); Fortitude save (DC 14) negates, see *Dungeon Master's Guide* 75.

W4. SUBMERGED HOUSES

The roofs of Waterford's half-submerged houses rise from the water like headstones in a cemetery. All the submerged huts are essentially identical. Each is a square structure approximately 20 feet on a side, and until recently, each housed one locathah family. A typical house contains several long rectangular stones (beds), rotting fish and seaweed packed in a stone case (the family's food supply), and decorative scrimshaw ornaments (worthless).

These dwellings are flooded to a depth of between 4 and 7 feet. Therefore, any character must succeed at a Swim check (DC 10) to move within them.

W5. QUEE'S PALACE (EL 4)

This house is twice the size of the others, and its roof is thatched with a shiny green material. Stacked stones line the window openings, and an oblong tan bag swings from a nail atop the door frame.

The shiny substance covering the roof is alligator skin—a symbol of leadership. The "bag" is actually a mummified ogre's head; Quee tacked it here years ago after she slaughtered the brute.

Despite its size (20 feet by 40 feet), Quee's palace isn't much different from the other houses. The single room contains six beds for the chieftain and her family, plus a stone locker containing a few worthless stone carvings and bone tools. The palace is flooded to a depth of 3 feet, so a Small PC must succeed at a Swim check (DC 10) to move around inside.

Creatures: After Oosah killed a few locathahs with his corrupting gaze, he went on to slay two vipers. Then he dumped the bodies here and animated them.

Large Zombies (Large Snakes) (2): hp 29 each; *Monster Manual* 192.

Medium-Size Zombies (Locathah) (6): hp 16 each; *Monster Manual* 191.

Tactics: Oosah tries to steer any battle on land to this house. The zombies attack when the first PC enters. All battles here are subject to the rules described in the "Fighting in the Water" sidebar.

W6. THE ARMORY

Decades ago, this circular stockade served as Waterford's defensive post. The limestone wall is 7 feet tall, except where it has crumbled away to form an entrance to area **W6a**.

Limestone Wall: 6 in. thick; Hardness 5; hp 10; break DC 10; Climb DC 5.

When Oosah moved into town, the armory became his lair. The structure connects with the submerged caverns where the locathahs raised their young, and where Oosah made an entryway into Kinokuniya's tomb.

W6A. THE WAITING AREA

Blocks of stone lie heaped around the crumbled entryway. Rocks and leaves lie in piles within the 20-foot-diameter circle formed by the ruined, ivy-covered walls. In the center of the circle sits a hut built of mud and sticks. To the east, stone stairs descend into the earth.

Oosah prepared both his potions and his plans here. If the PCs have not already attracted Oosah's attention, they encounter him here.

Oosah, Male Locathah Ghost Clr6: See "Oosah" for complete statistics.

W6B. COOKING HUT

This hut measures approximately 10 feet by 5 feet. A large iron tripod and pot stand over a 2-foot-deep depression filled with old cinders in the middle of its single chamber. The mud-and-stick walls taper to a small hole in the ceiling. Numerous clay bottles sit atop two small caskets against the back wall.

This hut was Oosah's home. The opening in the roof, 7 feet overhead, allows smoke from the cookfire to escape. One casket contains potion brewing materials; the other contains herbal ingredients and rare teas worth 75 gp. The pot is empty, but the bottles are filled with potions.

Treasure: Four *potions of cure light wounds*, two *potions of cure moderate wounds*, and a *potion of neutralize poison*. (If the party lacks the means to breathe underwater, replace the *potions of cure light wounds* with *potions of water breathing* that Oosah was making to sell.)

W6C. STAIRS

Only the top 3 feet of this staircase is above water, and the cavern to which it provides access is completely flooded. The PCs need some means of water breathing to explore this area or the rest of Waterford.

The only furnishings in the cave are a few low stone beds for attendants watching over the eggs in the nursery (area **W6d**).

W6D. NURSERY

Thick, red strands of protoplasm float through the water in this 20-foot by 30-foot cavern, following a slight current that flows through the room. Small crevices in the north and south walls run the length of the cavern floor. In the northeastern corner, one such crevice widens into a small passageway.

The current flowing through this cave results from an underground river that passes through this chamber on its way to feed Murky Pond. The red strands are locathah eggs.

Oosah used several castings of *stone shape* to make a 3-foot-tall passageway in the north wall. This corridor stretches 10 feet and ends at area **T1**.

THE SOGGY TOMB OF KINOKUNIYA (AREA T)

Kinokuniya built his home beneath Waterford soon after he saved the town from drought. His abode could have been far more grandiose if Kinokuniya had bothered to make it so. As it was, he simply made a comfortable space, set a few traps, and placed one great guardian on watch: the legendary kobold Retiss-Abbas, doomed to act as a guardian of his enemy's tomb.

DUNGEON FEATURES

Totally submerged areas are subject to the combat restrictions detailed in the "Fighting in the Water" sidebar. Any area flooded to a depth of 3 feet imposes combat restrictions only to Small creatures; Medium creatures move at half speed.

There is no natural lighting in Kinokuniya's Tomb. All ceilings are 15 feet high unless noted otherwise. A slight current moves through areas **T1**, **T2**, **T6**, and **T7**.

T1. ICE WALL (EL 6)

An underground cavern extends into the distance from this area. A slight current causes the water to flow toward the tunnel in the west wall. About 20 feet ahead, a ragged white wall blocks the cavern. A humanoid shape forms a dark pattern within the wall.

The river is 5 feet deep. The white wall is made of ice, and the shape within it is Oosah's entombed corpse. Oosah died after triggering the *cone of cold* trap (see below), which is still active. The underground river is slightly warmer than the ice, so it has melted openings between the ice wall and the cavern.

PCs hacking through the ice to get to the other side or to free the corpse trigger the trap. If the trap is disabled, the PCs can safely exhume Oosah by dealing 30 points of damage to the wall. The corpse still holds Oosah's masterwork club and *+1 large wooden shield*.

Ice Wall: 20 in. thick; Hardness 0 (takes double damage from fire attacks); hp 60; break DC 32.

Trap: When a creature larger than Tiny passes below the point marked 1 on the map (directly above the ice wall), a *cone of cold* is triggered. Kinokuniya modified the spell slightly so that

the effect drains heat from both its victim and the surrounding water. Thus, the spell both deals damage and transforms the water within the spell range to ice, entombing the victim. The trap can be avoided by using *stone shape* or a similar spell to make a corridor around the trap, or through the use of spells such as *teleport*, *dimension door*, and the like. Characters can also use *transmute rock to mud* and *soften earth and stone* to dig their way around the trap.

***Cone of Cold* Trap:** CR 6; proximity trigger; automatic reset; Reflex save (DC 17) avoids; spell effect (*cone of cold*—9d6 points of cold damage to all within a 10-ft.-radius—plus entombment); victims are immobilized beneath 2d6 inches of ice; death by asphyxiation occurs after creatures' breath runs out; see the Dungeon Master's *Guide*, page 85; Search (DC 30), Disable Device (DC 30). *Note:* The ice can be removed from around a character by dealing it 3 points of damage per inch of thickness.

T2. GUARDED NODE (EL 6)

This water in this cavern is 15 feet deep. It appears to be an extension of the previous cavern—a rough, natural cave extending into watery darkness.

Trap: Kinokuniya set a monster summoning trap in a tiny node within the cave wall to stop trespassers. It triggers as soon as any creature comes within 20 feet.

***Summon Monster V* Trap:** CR 6; proximity trigger; automatic reset (24 hours); spell effect (*summon monster* V spell summons two juvenile tojanidas); Search (DC 30); Disable Device (DC 30).

Creatures: When the first party member passes the node, two juvenile tojanidas materialize and attack.

Tojanidas, Juvenile (2): hp 19 each; *Monster Manual* 177.

Tactics: The tojanidas release their ink clouds before attacking, since their Blind-Fight feats helps them negotiate such conditions. Thereafter, one tojanida mounts a frontal assault while the other attempts to flank. A tojanida reduced to less than 0 hit points returns to the Elemental Plane of Water. The trap cannot summon such a creature again for 24 hours.

T3. KINOKUNIYA'S SANCTUM (EL 5)

The PCs break free of the surface of the water as they mount the stairs. Areas **T3**, **T4**, and **T5** once served as Kinokuniya's rooms and workspace. Many of the items he left here have been destroyed.

> Water covers much of this 50-foot-square room. Hunks of wrecked furniture stand sentinel all around. A quartet of tarnished brass chairs stands in a circle at the center of the room. Shelves along the south wall are full of knickknacks coated in a green grime. Tattered and moldy tapestries, two of which flank a stone door, cover the west wall.

This chamber, now flooded to a depth of 3 feet, was once a dining room for Kinokuniya's few guests (usually extradimensional spellcasters with whom he wanted to converse). The table around which the chairs once stood has decayed to nothing. The knickknacks are mundane and all ruined.

Creatures: The brass chairs, which are under the influence of *permanent animate object* spells, have been instructed to attack anyone in this room who is not Kinokuniya. The chairs do not attack PCs who are on the stairs or otherwise not in the room.

Animated Brass Chairs (4): hp 5 each; speed 50 ft.; *Monster Manual* 17.

Tactics: As mindless creatures, the chairs display no particular strategy.

Development: This room holds little of interest. The locked door to the library is difficult to open even after unlocking due to the deep water on either side of it.

Stone Door: 5 in. thick; Hardness 8; hp 60; break DC 28; Open Lock DC 25.

T4. LIBRARY

> The walls of this 30-foot by 40-foot room have been carved into bookshelves. The hundreds of tomes crammed into them have completely decayed. The books on the east wall have fallen into the water covering the floor, forming a lump of detritus. A massive stone desk, carved from the wall itself, stands against the south wall.

This room is flooded to a depth of 3 feet. Most of the books crumble at the merest touch. The stone desk has two drawers that Kinokuniya secured with *arcane lock* spells (caster level 17th). To date, this precaution has protected the contents from water damage. Each drawer can be opened with a *knock* or *dispel magic* spell. The tops of the drawers are a few inches below the waterline; water floods in when the drawers are opened, but the contents will not be damaged if they are removed immediately. The first drawer holds a bone scroll case containing a scroll of *fly* and a scroll of *bull's strength*. The second drawer contains 500 gp in a leather pouch.

T5. LABORATORY

> A mural on the north wall of this 40-foot-square room depicts great interlocking circles against a black background. White lines, numbers, and symbols are scattered across the diagram. On the floor in the southwest corner is a circle, 10 feet in diameter, stained in purple. A massive stone table, covered with instruments, stands in the northeast corner. This room is not flooded.

Kinokuniya used this room for summonings and research. The mural is a diagram explaining the relationship between the various planes of existence. Its meaning can be deduced with a successful Knowledge (the planes) check (DC 15).

A successful Search check (DC 20) reveals a series of symbols and notes scratched in the left corner of the mural. These marks are the key to solving the basic mystery of the lake. A second successful Knowledge (arcana) check (DC 20) or Knowledge (the planes) check (DC 15) made while examining these scratchings reveals that the creator of the mural made the lake level rise by summoning an elemental from the Elemental

Plane of Water to Murky Pond, leaving a tiny opening through which the elemental could draw water from that plane, and using a *binding* spell to hold it here and keep it from abusing or escaping through the tiny portal. This information serves to corroborate Oosah's story.

The table is covered with old but still intact alchemical equipment. Together the salvageable items weigh about 40 pounds and make up an alchemist's lab. The same Search check also turns up the **Treasure**. Searching the wall behind the table (Search, DC 15) reveals a small, inset shelf that holds Kinokuniya's diary.

Scanning the diary takes 1 hour and reveals the same information as the mural. Reading the entire book or making a successful Search check (DC 25) takes 3 hours and reveals the exact wording of the *binding*—namely that Kinokuniya required the elemental to remain "as long as a soul remains in Waterford." It further describes how Kinokuniya promised that he would invite more water creatures to the lake to provide company for the creature, whose name is Rchkch. In his diary, Kinokuniya admits that he never intended to live up to this promise.

With a successful Knowledge (arcana) check (DC 20) or Knowledge (the planes) check (DC 15), a character can also deduce from the diary that Kinokuniya inscribed a second *binding* spell onto his golden goblet, so that he wouldn't lose it. This spell would allow him to end, renew, or reword the *binding* spell should the need ever arise. The goblet in question currently lies at the bottom of the underground river (area **T7**). For notes on its use and abuse, see "Solving the Dilemmas," below.

Also of interest is the last line written in the diary, which reads, "The great sphere will be my final resting place, and I have also set over it a guardian. He will guard me, and my sphere shall guard him." This line refers to area **T8**.

Treasure: An unlabeled jar containing two ounces of *sovereign glue* (with the requisite ounce of *oil of slipperiness*) lies forgotten amid the debris of the laboratory table.

T6. MAIN CAVERN

The river runs through this natural cavern to a depth of 10 feet, and the ceiling rises 45 feet overhead. A successful Swim check (DC 10) allows a character to move forward at normal speed.

Once the PCs are within sighting distance of area **T7**, read or paraphrase the following:

> Ahead, a bizarre vision rises from the river—a globe at least 25 feet high that burns with dim phosphorescence. It seems geometrically perfect, although the lowest part of it is hidden beneath the surface of the river.

The globe is a customized *wall of force* made *permanent*; it functions just like the *wall of force* spell except for its size and shape.

T7. BENEATH THE DOME

In fact, the globe is not a perfect sphere; there is an opening at its nadir, 5 feet below the river's surface. A steel pole set in the cavern floor extends up through this opening, rising 20 feet before ending at a platform (area **T8**). Climbing the pole requires a successful Climb check (DC 20). Climbing along the underside of the platform is easier (Climb, DC 15) because of the supporting girders there.

On the cavern floor near the pole lie several items that Retiss-Abbas kicked off the platform in a fit of pique when he arrived two hundred years ago (see area **T8**, below). Only belatedly did the kobold leader realize that once the items were in the water, he could no longer get to them. Successful Search checks at the DCs given below reveal the following items half buried in cave mud:

- **DC 15:** A golden goblet with a *binding* spell inscribed upon it. This item is the goblet mentioned in Kinokuniya's diary (area **T5**). See the "Solving the Dilemmas" section below for information on its use. Once the spell has been read from it, the goblet is still worth 100 gp.
- **DC 20:** A pile of golden weights and measures (250 gp total)
- **DC 25:** A moss-encrusted but still functional *phylactery of faithfulness*.

Unless the PCs have slain Oosah's ghost, he might still be following them ethereally as they search the river bottom. The ghost knows about the goblet, and he would have recovered it before now if he had been able to move physical objects. As it is, he must wait for others to remove it from the mud. If the PCs uncover the goblet, Oosah casts *detect thoughts* to find out what the PCs are thinking about it. If they decide to use it, Oosah either attacks them or attempts to lure them to their doom—perhaps by encouraging them to ascend to the bier (area **T8**).

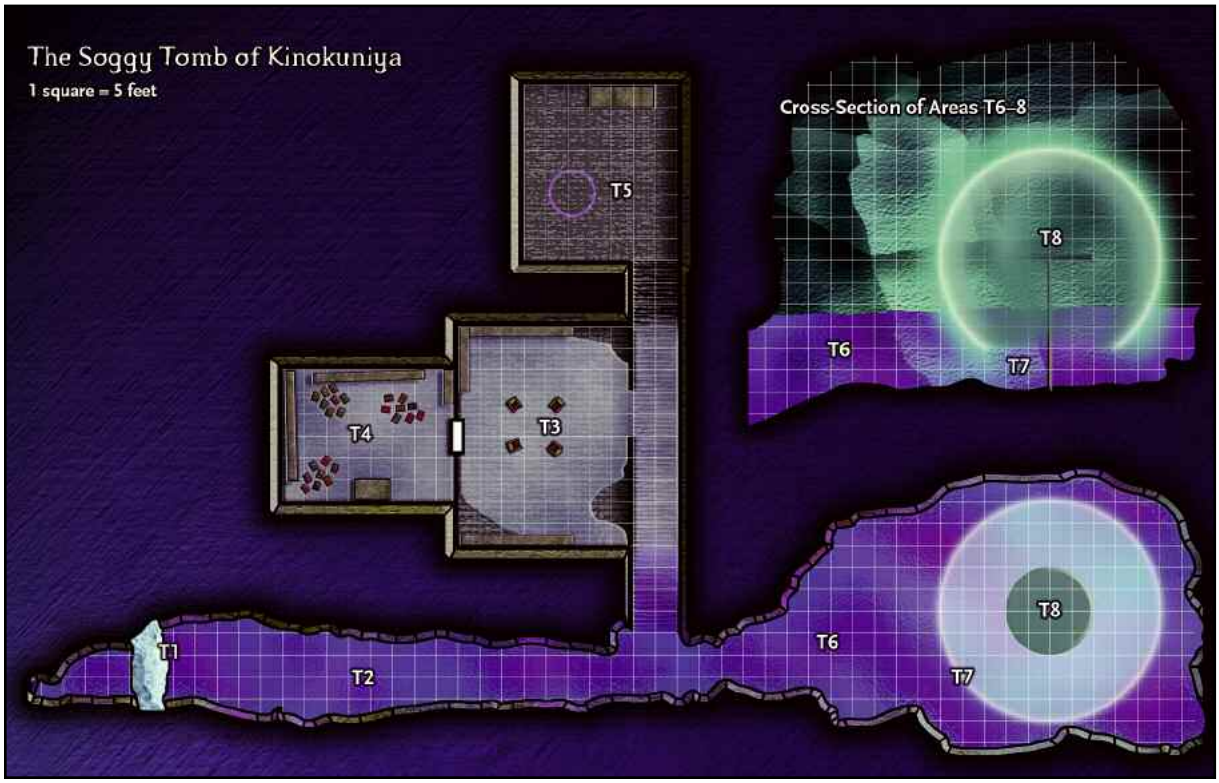
T8. THE BIER (EL 9)

> This circular steel platform measures about 15 feet in diameter. A 10-foot-wide gap stretches between the platform edge and the dim walls of the sphere. At the north end of the platform stands a rectangular chunk of black marble, roughly 5 feet tall and 7 feet wide, covered in carvings.

The marble chunk is the sarcophagus of Kinokuniya. It is a remarkable work of art, obviously carved from a single stone. The sarcophagus lid is covered with the holy symbols of a host of chaotic and neutral deities, which have successfully kept Retiss-Abbas away from the corpse of Kinokuniya for all these years. The sarcophagus lid can easily be moved aside to reveal a desiccated human corpse in rotted robes, wearing a delicate headband of silver studded with aquamarine. This item is the *headband of Kinokuniya* (see below).

Creature: The lone resident of the platform is a shriveled, 3-foot-tall, scaly monstrosity with glowing red eyes. This creature is the legendary Retiss-Abbas, the kobold leader who terrorized the gnomes of Spate's Grove.

Retiss-Abbas was born centuries ago in a far-off land. Though he was among the strongest kobolds ever born, he was eventually captured and slain by a school of necromancers. They later used a *create greater undead* spell to raise him as a vampire, hoping to add a powerful ally to their undead army. But Retiss-Abbas escaped and eventually found his way to Spate's Grove.



There, he built a kobold empire and terrorized other humanoids in the region. Shortly before he died of old age, Kinokuniya placed a *teleportation circle* spell where Retiss-Abbas would be sure to stumble upon it. Sure enough, the vampire teleported onto the platform just before the wizard breathed his last. The only way out is over the stream below, and since vampires cannot cross running water, Retiss-Abbas was stuck here. Over the last two hundred years, he has howled his anguish to the uncaring water, sought vainly for a magical solution, and sat on the platform, playing dice and slowly losing his mind.

Retiss-Abbas, Male Kobold Vampire Rgr6/Sor1: CR 9; Small Undead (reptilian; 3 ft. 4 in.); HD 7d12; hp 45; Init +8; Spd 30 ft.; AC 22, touch 15, flat-footed 18; BAB +6; Grap +7; Atk +12 melee (1d4+7, slam), or +11/+6 melee (1d6+6/19–20, *+1 short sword*) and +11 melee (1d4+2/19–20, masterwork dagger), or +11 ranged (1d8/19–20, light crossbow); SA blood drain, children of the night, create spawn, domination, energy drain, favored enemies (gnomes +2, humans +1), spells, two-weapon fighting ability; SQ alternate form, darkvision 60 ft., DR 15/+1, fast healing 5, gaseous form, light sensitivity –1, resistances (cold 20, electricity 20), spider climb, turn resistance +4, undead traits; AL CE; SV Fort +5, Ref +8, Will +8; Str 21, Dex 19, Con –, Int 13, Wis 15, Cha 19.

Skills: Bluff +12*, Concentration +8, Craft (trapmaking) +5†, Hide +16*, Intuit Direction +6, Listen +15*, Move Silently +16*, Profession (mining) +3†, Search +17*†, Sense Motive +10*, Spellcraft +6, Spot +15*, Use Rope +8, Wilderness Lore +9. *Feats:* Alertness, Combat Reflexes, Dodge, Improved Initiative, Iron Will, Leadership, Lightning Reflexes, Power Attack, Track.

*Includes +8 racial bonus (vampire) to Bluff, Hide, Listen, Move Silently, Search, Sense Motive, and Spot checks.

†Includes +2 racial bonus (kobold) to Craft (trapmaking), Profession (mining), and Search checks.

Ranger Spells Prepared (2; base save DC = 12 + spell level): 1st—*magic fang, resist elements.*

Sorcerer Spells Known (5/4; base save DC = 14 + spell level): 0—*daze, ghost sound, prestidigitation, read magic;* 1st—*grease, sleep.*

See the *Monster Manual* page 221 for vampire special attacks and qualities. Note that the save DC for Retiss-Abbas's domination and energy drain abilities is 17. Retiss-Abbas cannot use his children of the night ability here because there aren't any such creatures around to summon.

Tactics: If the vampire does not notice the PCs coming, he is sitting in the center of the platform when they arrive, playing at dice. If he senses intruders, he becomes gaseous and reveals himself after the party has climbed to the platform. If not attacked, Retiss-Abbas introduces himself in dramatic fashion and attempts to parley with the PCs in hopes of gaining release from his prison. If he discovers they can't (or won't) help him, he attacks.

The vampire's first combat action is to cast *grease* on the edges of the platform, hoping to send unwary PCs tumbling down. (A fall puts a character back in the water at area **T7** but deals no damage.) Thereafter, Retiss-Abbas attacks gnomes and spellcasters first. He hasn't the sanity to realize that his *domination* power would be useful, but if he's badly hurt, he might remember it. If reduced to 5 or fewer hit points, Retiss-Abbas becomes gaseous and floats above the characters while he takes advantage of his fast healing before rejoining combat.

Retiss-Abbas cannot come within 5 feet of Kinokuniya's sarcophagus because of the holy symbols inscribed on it. If the

characters gather around the sarcophagus and make ranged attacks against Retiss-Abbas, he can respond only with his *domination* ability. The sarcophagus provides three-quarters cover to characters who hide behind it.

Unlike most vampires, Retiss-Abbas has no coffin to which he can return. (Since there's no daylight in the cavern, he is able to stay awake perpetually.) When reduced to 0 hit points, he assumes gaseous form and floats above the platform for several hours before dissipating forever.

† ***Headband of Kinokuniya* (cursed item):** This *headband of intellect* +2 requires its wearer to make a Will save (DC 20) each week it is worn. Failure shifts the character's alignment one step toward chaotic neutral (the law component disappears first). This item has no effect on a wearer who is already chaotic neutral and is not considered cursed in such a case. The alignment change can be altered only by a *wish* spell or similar effect. A wearer wishing to remove the headband must make a successful Will save (DC 20) to do so. Once the wearer becomes chaotic neutral, he or she can remove the headband freely, although the alignment change is permanent. The headband is otherwise identical to a *headband of intellect* +2.

SOLVING THE DILEMMAS

Ultimately, the PCs' mission is to make Waterford safe for the locathahs so that they can return to their homes. To succeed, they must deal with both Oosah and Rchkch in some manner. Party decisions could potentially change Murky Pond forever.

OOSAH

As long as Oosah remains in or near Murky Pond, Quee and her tribe will not return, and the ghost refuses to leave of his own free will. Reducing the ghost to 0 hp does no good because he rejuvenates in three days. Such an action also has the potential to release Rchkch if the PCs then leave (see "Leaving Waterford," below). However, since it was Oosah's obsession with controlling the elemental that led him to return as a ghost, he can be laid to rest by removing any chance he might have for success. If Rchkch is released, or a new *binding* spell is enacted in such a way as to prevent Oosah from gaining control of the elemental, Oosah's spirit departs forever.

Ad-hoc XP Award: Give the PCs a 1,000 XP story award if they put Oosah's spirit permanently to rest.

RCHKCH

If the PCs fail to realize the true nature of the lake, they might head back to Waterford without doing anything about Rchkch. If they simply leave after reducing Oosah to 0 hit points and do not alter the *binding*, Rchkch is released. If that situation occurs, proceed with "Leaving Waterford," below.

If the characters do learn that a sentient being lurks in Murky Pond, they have several options. If they have retrieved the *binding* goblet, they can alter or rearrange the wording of the *binding* spell. Activating the spell on the goblet works exactly like activating an arcane scroll. If the caster is not of sufficient level to cast *binding*, he or she must make a successful caster level check (DC 19) to cast the spell. A caster who fails must attempt a Will save (DC 22); failing this check means the

character using the goblet suffers a mishap (see the *Dungeon Master's Guide*, page 203).

A PC who successfully casts the *binding* spell must immediately state the new release trigger (since the caster level is 18th, Rchkch receives no saving throw). The trigger should satisfy all conditions found in the *Player's Handbook*, page 179. The new trigger must have some chance of coming to pass, but it can't be too easy to fulfill or the elemental will escape.

If desired, the characters can instead use their own magic to rearrange the conditions of Rchkch's stay on the Material Plane. A 5th-level party probably does not have access to *binding* spells, but one of the characters might possess a scroll bearing that spell. *Geas*, *charm monster*, and other Enchantment spells could provide a stopgap solution.

The PCs can also choose to leave the situation exactly as it is, if they are careful not to empty the town while they retrieve the locathahs.

Alternatively, the party can try to communicate with Rchkch and find out what he wants. Anyone who can speak Aquan can talk to him without magical aid; otherwise the characters must use a *tongues* spell or other magical effect. A *detect thoughts* or similar spell reveals only a terrible loneliness and sadness. Characters who manage to communicate with Rchkch learn that he wants to be free (see "Leaving Waterford" for more information on Rchkch's state of mind).

Leaving Waterford (EL 5)

As the PCs leave the town, but while they are still within sight of it, read or paraphrase the following if the *binding* is unaltered and they are the last "souls" to leave Waterford:

> A shudder ripples through the air, accompanied by a smell similar to that of approaching rain. A great splashing and rumbling emanates from Murky Pond, then with the roar of a hundred waterfalls, the lake turns into an enormous whirlpool. The walls of the submerged houses crack and shudder, and water engulfs their walls and roofs. Trees, weeds, and stones tear away from the shore and disappear into the vortex. With a great wrenching sound, Murky Pond lifts itself into a tower of water, within which flicker two dull green globes.

Creature: Rchkch stands 16 feet high. He cannot venture more than 50 feet from the body of water into which he was summoned, but since Poverty Creek flows out of Murky Pond, Rchkch can travel freely up and down the river.

The elemental is overjoyed at his release. He thanks the party, speaking in gurgling Aquan that sounds like the crash of glacier ice into the sea. Rchkch has waited two hundred years, and his patience has worn extremely thin.

If the PCs treat Rchkch with respect and deference, they can reason with him. But Rchkch is extremely dim (Int 5) and can't understand advanced concepts, especially those involving time. If the PCs can immediately produce other sentient aquatic creatures for Rchkch to commune with, the elemental agrees to remain, at least for a while. If they cannot, Rchkch departs unless convinced (via a successful Diplomacy check) to wait for the party to return with the locathahs. If the PCs become belligerent, Rchkch attacks.

Rchkch, Large Water Elemental: hp 68; *Monster Manual* 84.

Tactics: If Rchkch engages the characters, he fights for 3 rounds at most before departing for his home plane. He has no intention of killing them; he only wants to teach them a lesson. If reduced to half his hit points before 3 rounds, he leaves earlier.

Ad-hoc XP Award: If the PCs part with Rchkch on amicable terms, they should receive experience points as if they had defeated him in battle. If Rchkch departs, the connection between the pond and the Elemental Plane of Water is severed and the shoreline of Murky Pond retreats by 5 feet.

Conclusion

If the PCs lay Oosah's ghost to rest, the locathahs return to Waterford. However, if the water level in the lake has fallen, Waterford is no longer as hospitable to the tribe as it once was. The tribe prepares to find another home, treating the PCs brusquely and paying them no honor.

If Rchkch is still there, bound or not, the locathahs move back into Waterford. Quee offers the PCs her *spined shield* in gratitude, provided that they have treated the tribe with respect and not resorted to violence. If Rchkch is free and waiting for them, the locathahs are a little worried at first, but they soon grow accustomed to their odd neighbor. Rchkch finds the locathahs delightful company and agrees to stay of his own volition.

As soon as the locathahs leave the mill, the residents of Spate's Grove throw a banquet to honor the PCs. Czen, Harvest, and Tollie give the PCs their promised reward. Tollie's offer of a share in next year's harvest can be almost anything you wish it to be, and this particular windfall can arrive at any future time that the PCs need some cash.

If Oosah has not been put to rest, and the locathahs have not been defeated, the standoff in Spate's Grove continues. The situation at the mill becomes permanent, and soon the locathahs are accepted as a fact of life. Waterford has no choice but to allow the occupation and lose most of its shipping business because of it. Over the next several months, many families move out, and the town becomes poorer. A few townsfolk might blame the PCs and plot revenge against them. Ω

Adam Jortner is a freelance writer and playwright living in Virginia. His plays have been produced in New York, Boston, Louisville, and St. Louis. "Fish Story" is his first RPG publication.

ROCK AND AWE! THOSE MEDDLING KIDS ARE ALL RIGHT!

POLY POLY POLY

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POLYHEDRON 158

RPGA NETWORK

d20 system

Cartography by Christopher West

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HIJINKS is. . .
Writer: Jeff Quick
Editor: Erik Mona Art Director: Kyle Hunter
Special Art Guests: Dave crosland, Jake Parker, C. Scott Morse, Stan Shaw, and Rey Parker
Cover Art: Jason Martin and Heather McCollum of Artplaymix

Hijinx

A Polyhedron Mini-Game of Animated Pop Adventure

Hijinx is a modern-day re-creation of television rock band adventures in the style of *Josie and the Pussycats* or *Jem and the Holograms*. We've also pulled from "real-life" TV rock bands like the Monkees or the Beatles in *A Hard Day's Night* or *Help!*. Dozens of less memorable "kids in a rock band" cartoons litter American TV lore, including *Jabberjaw* or *The Partridge Family 2200 A.D.* (or *Meatballs and Spaghetti* if you really want to scrape the bottom of the genre barrel).

All of these cartoony rock 'n' roll comedy-adventure shows add up to a bright legacy of more or less clean-cut, well-intentioned kids who just want to have fun and do the right thing. In the process, they somehow wind up in a crazyquilt of adventures, pickles, and scrapes.

However, this legacy is between 20 and 40 years old. A lot has changed in pop culture and the music industry since those days. We love TV kitsch as much as you do (possibly more), but *Hijinx* would be hopelessly square if we ignored everything after Reagan left office. So cell phones, mp3 files, reality shows, media manipulation, and the ironic, self-awareness that the kids love so much are tossed into the whole lollapalooza alongside the nostalgia of rock 'n' roll comedy-adventure shows from the 60s, 70s, and 80s.

Part satire, part homage, and all in good fun, *Hijinx* is a game of hitting the big time with style...and just maybe you'll learn a lesson or two along the way!

WHAT'S IT ALL ABOUT?

Your goal is to go platinum with your record. To do that, you need to get out of the garage, build an audience, get a record deal, and then sell a million copies by playing lots of shows and touring the

world.

But rock stardom is about more than just music. It's also about *having fabulous adventures*. As your stars rise, you'll be involved in a lot more than stage performances. Everywhere you go, your characters get involved in good causes, wacky mishaps, and dirty dealings with a constantly rotating cast of allies and villains.

It won't seem strange that practically everywhere you go you'll encounter some villainous sort with an all-new nefarious scheme, ranging from kicking you out of your apartment to ruling the world. You'll have to put the kibosh on these plots to help out yourselves and your friends. Then you can play a triumphant concert at the end! But don't worry. Everything you do in the name of rock adds to your fame and musicality. Whether it's stopping a robotic invasion or winning over the dour music judge at the battle of the bands, believe in yourself and you're on your way to superstardom!

THE RULES

Since it's a d20 game, we're not going to bother explaining all the rules all over again where they're the same. However, Hijinx puts a new spin on several d20 concepts, so we'll be referring you to the Player's Handbook pretty often to explain how Hijinx is different.

The biggest difference between the two games is that there's no fighting in Hijinx. It's not even a possibility. To stay true to the source material, nearly all interactions happen with music or non-violent action. Besides, fighting doesn't sell records. Playing music sells records. You win over skeptics and non-fans by converting them through the power of your music, not by beating them up.

Fortunately, the process of winning over skeptics and non-fans is a lot like the d20 combat system. Basically, every time you'd think "combat" in d20, think "rocking" in Hijinx.

Hijinx also includes several new components to the d20 experience. A good way to think of Hijinx is like a collection of mini-games loosely based on d20. Different mini-games will be appropriate at different times depending on circumstances. A session might consist of several different

HANDY D&D-TO-HIJINX JARGON CONVERSION CHART

Why bother renaming things when they're mechanically almost identical? It's funner.

When You Read...	Think Like...
Cool Points/Dice	Hit Points/Dice
Defense	Armor Class
Threads/Accessories	Armor/Shields
Vibes	Damage
Instruments	Weapons
Perform (attempt)	Attack
Performance	A situation where you'd roll inititiave
Rocking	Combat
Set	One specific combat

challenges strung together like an episode of a TV comedy-action-adventure show. Each session will include a performance, but also will probably involve some investigative and action-oriented skill use, and some running around and kooky hijinks. It'll all make sense. Keep reading.

This Roleplaying Game was manufactured to meet critical quality standards. If you believe the game has a manufacturing defect, please call our Quality Management Department at 555-ROCK.

Jeff thanks: William Hanna and Joseph Barbera, Dan and Josie DiCarlo, the pre-fab four (Mike, Mickey, Davey, and Peter), Deborah Kaplan and Harry Elfont for the motion picture and soundtrack, the Spice Girls for being living cartoons, Erik for putting up with this nonsense, the Aquabats, Cake, Five Iron Frenzy, MxPx, Less Than Jake for inspirational tunes, and UHF station programmers everywhere for all the syndicated wonder. Jeff uses and endorses Microsoft Word word processors.

Erik thanks: The Bugaloos, Old Man Mona, Sly and the Family Stone, Jeff for having this kooky idea, the teen angels, the Voice Input Child Identicant, roman coppola and the CQ soundtrack, and the rock-a-fire explosion.

Kyle thanks: Belle & Sebastian, Pulp, The London Suede, Paul Weller, The Jam, Ride, The Kings of Convenience, Vampyros Lesbos, Gert Wilden, Elvis Costello, Dave Gedge of The Wedding Present and Cinerama, Germany's Crippled Hot Wax, Stereolab, Syd Mead, Jerry Anderson, Tim Leary, Jamie Hewlett, and Sid and Marty Krofft.

This *Polyhedron* d20 System Mini-Game requires the Dungeons & Dragons *Player's Handbook* to play. *Polyhedron* Mini-Games adapt the standard D&D or d20 Modern rules and conventions to nonstandard settings and genres. Unless specifically noted in the text, this Mini-Game follows the core D&D rules.

If you know how to play D&D, you'll pick up the rules of this game in moments.

Hijinx utilizes game mechanics developed for the new Dungeons & Dragons game by Jonathan Tweet, Monte Cook, Skip Williams, Richard Baker, and Peter Adkison. This Wizards of the Coast game contains no Open Game Content.

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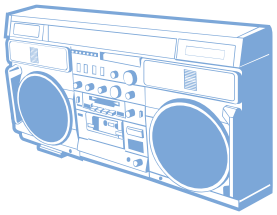
Based on the original Dungeons & Dragons game by Gary Gygax and Dave Arneson.

TRACK 2: WE'RE WITH THE BAND



Follow the D&D pattern you're used to for making characters, but check back here for highlights and differences.

ABILITIES

4d6 six times. You know the drill. When you're assigning ability scores, keep in mind that skills and saving throws work as they do in D&D, but rocking requires different abilities than combat. When you're rocking, the following differences apply:

- In most places where you would use Strength, substitute Charisma. When performing, use your Charisma modifier (not your Strength modifier) to add to your perform attempts and modify the number of vibes you deal.
- In most places where you would use Dexterity, substitute Wisdom. Add your Wisdom modifier to your Defense to help you ward off bad vibes.
- In most places where you would use Constitution, substitute Intelligence. When you roll to determine how many cool points you receive each level, add your Intelligence modifier, not your Constitution modifier.

RACE

You're human. Everybody's human. You have all the standard human stuff like extra skill points and an extra feat and freebie multiclassing. Knock yourself out.

MUSIC STYLE

Music style is like a whole-party class. It defines your strengths as a group based on what kind of music you play. Before you get any further into individual character creation, think as a group first. What kind of music will you be playing? What kind of tunes will you be unleashing on the world? Different styles grant different bonuses to band members. The list of musical styles includes:

BUBBLEGUM:	+1 style bonus to perform catchy songs.
ELECTRONICA/RAVE:	+1 style bonus to perform dance songs.
HIP-HOP:	+1 to Reflex saves.
METAL:	+1 style bonus to perform power songs.
PUNK:	+1 to Fortitude saves.
PROGRESSIVE:	DR 1 against bored vibes.
ROCK:	+1 style bonus to perform radio-friendly songs.

You might also consider some non-rockin' options like country, R&B, world, swing, or "jazz odyssey." You could even decide that your band is going to be a combination of styles that doesn't easily fit a category. Okay, whatever, but you don't get any bonuses for that. This game is about rocking and topping the charts. You do yourself no favors playing weird stuff that doesn't fit a radio format.

CLASSES

Classes in *Hijinx* are the instrument your character plays. When you make your character, think about what you've always wanted to do in a band. Your group will work best if you have a mix of classes, but don't worry too much right now. Your band might turn out with three drummers and a bassist. That's cool. Rock 'n' roll isn't about following rules, man.

Your class determines your proficiencies. So if you take a level of guitar, you're proficient with guitar. If you want to be proficient with a different instrument, multiclass.

WHAT IT ALL MEANS

Check here if you don't understand a category in the class descriptions below.

Abilities: This is what ability scores are most helpful for this class.

Cool Die: This is like Hit Dice in almost every way. Except much cooler. At first level, you have maximum cool points plus your Intelligence modifier.

Skills: This section works just like it does in D&D. Remember to add one skill point at each level because you're human.

Class Table: This chart shows how your character improves as he or she picks up new levels. This works just like you'd expect it to from D&D, with the exception of Defense.

Defense: This is built-in Armor Class. In *Hijinx* it's called developing a thick skin.

Range: Unlike D&D, *Hijinx* makes no distinction between melee and ranged "attacks." Music affects people who hear it, close or far away. Some instruments carry farther than others, however, and that range is reflected in your class choice. Horns, for instance, can be heard all over the place, while a DJ's record scratching can only really be heard if you're standing practically next to the guy. Don't worry too much if your range is short. Think of it as your acoustic range. A better Constitution, better instruments, and a few feats can help. Also, speakers are made to get your music out there.

Note for numbered special abilities: When a class ability is followed by a number such as Blow Off and Blow Off 2, the effects do not stack. The later ability supercedes the earlier one.

VOCALIST

A vocalist's voice is her instrument of choice. Vocalists *are* their instruments, so they're ready to go almost anywhere. These singers often take lead when no one else has a good reason to. They can take more knocks from the crowd, and their abilities give them bonuses to lead.

Abilities: Charisma is vital for a vocalist. It helps you hit more often and increases your vibes when you do hit. Intelligence is also useful to increase your cool points, since you're probably going to be up front, taking a lot of bad vibes.

Cool Die: d12

CLASS SKILLS

The vocalist's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Animal Empathy (Cha), Appraise (Int), Bluff (Cha), Diplomacy (Cha), Disguise (Dex), Drive (Dex), Gather Information (Cha), Innuendo (Wis), Intimidate (Str), Jump (Str), Listen (Wis), Pep Talk (Wis), Read Lips (Int), Scram (Con), Speak Language, Spot (Wis), Use Rope (Dex).

Skill Points at 1st level: (4 + Int modifier) × 4.

Skill Points at each additional level: 4 + Int modifier.

CLASS FEATURES

These are the class features of a vocalist.

Range: 30 feet + 5 feet per point of Constitution modifier.

Vibes: This is how many points of vibes you can send with your voice.

Backup bump: If you are not the lead vocalist, you may attempt to aid another as a free action if the lead is also using vocals. You may use this ability once per song.

Blow Off: You can ignore the first 10 points of bad vibes from unspotted targets directed at you in a set when you take lead.

A Capella Knockout: At 3rd level, once per round, but no more than once per level per day, you can attempt to stun a target with your voice. You must declare you are using a stun attempt before making the perform roll. An opponent hit by the attempt must make a Will saving throw (DC 10 + one-half your level + Strength modifier) and receives normal vibes. If the saving throw fails, the target is stunned for 1 round. A stunned person can't act, has no Wisdom bonus to Defense, and all perform attempts against that target are at +2.

Rey Lewis

TABLE 2–1: THE VOCALIST

Level	Base Perform Bonus	Defense	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Vibes	Special
1	+1	+2	+1	+0	+2	1d6	Backup bump
2	+2	+2	+1	+0	+3	1d6	Blow off
3	+3	+2	+2	+1	+3	1d6	A capella knockout
4	+3	+3	+2	+1	+4	1d8	
5	+4/+1	+3	+3	+1	+4	1d8	Blow off 2
6	+5/+2	+3	+3	+2	+5	1d8	Signature sound
7	+6/+3	+4	+3	+2	+5	1d10	
8	+6/+3	+4	+4	+2	+6	1d10	Like you mean it
9	+7/+4/+1	+4	+4	+3	+6	1d10	
10	+8/+5/+2	+5	+5	+3	+7	1d12	Blow off 3

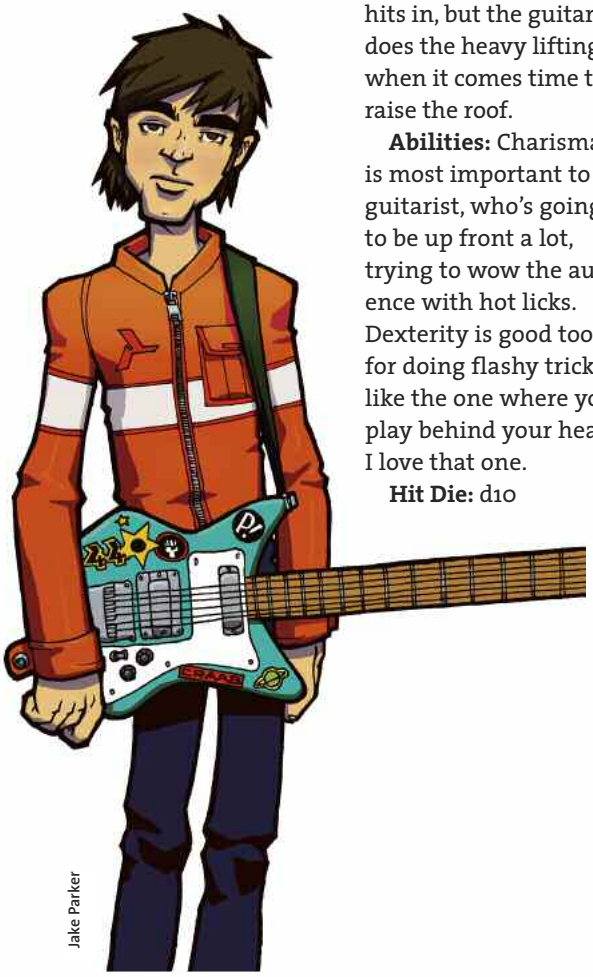
Blow Off 2: When taking lead, you ignore the first 30 points of bad vibes from unspotted targets directed at you in a set.

Signature Sound: You have developed a vocal style that is distinct and easily identifiable. No target can get a cover bonus from your perform attempts.

Blow Off 3: You can ignore all bad vibes from unspotted targets when you take lead.

GUITARIST

The guitarist is right next to the vocalist, washing the crowd with virtuoso finger work. The vocalist gets more hits in, but the guitarist does the heavy lifting when it comes time to raise the roof.



Jake Parker

Abilities: Charisma is most important to a guitarist, who's going to be up front a lot, trying to wow the audience with hot licks. Dexterity is good too for doing flashy tricks like the one where you play behind your head. I love that one.

Hit Die: d10

CLASS SKILLS

The guitarist's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Bluff (Cha), Disable Device (Int), Drive (Dex), Escape Artist (Dex), Innuendo (Wis), Jump (Str), Scram (Con), Sleight of Hand (Dex), Spot (Wis).

Skill Points at 1st level: (2 + Int modifier) × 4.

Skill Points at each additional level: 2 + Int modifier.

CLASS FEATURES

These are the class features of a guitarist.

Range: 30 feet + 5 feet per point of Constitution modifier.

Guitar Solo: In one song per set, you just go nuts. When your focus is adjacent to a target that is in your range, you deal double vibes.

Special Face: When you're really into it, you make this face like you're really concentrating. The fans go wild. Add your level to any good vibes that fan club members give to the band.

Hot Lick: Add +2 to vibes when playing guitar.

Hot Lick 2: Add +4 to vibes when playing guitar.

Wailin' Solo: In one song per set, take the spotlight with a stunning solo. When your focus is adjacent to a target that is in your range, you deal triple vibes.

Hot Lick 3: Add +6 to vibes when playing guitar.

Guitar God: You can do flash as a free action (see Sleight of Hand in Track 3: That Thing You Do).

BASSIST

The crowd might go wild for the vocal riffs and screaming guitar solos, but song after song, their butts are all shaking to what you're putting out, dig? You don't get a lot of glory, but you know your job: laying down a rhythm and staying cool under pressure.

Abilities: Wisdom is most useful for a bass player, helping you stay out of the line of fire, and honing your observation skills. Intelligence also helps, offsetting your low skill points and giving you a little bump on cool points.

Hit Die: d8

TABLE 2-2: THE GUITARIST

Level	Base Perform Bonus	Defense	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special
1	+1	+1	+0	+2	+1	Guitar solo
2	+2	+1	+0	+3	+1	
3	+3	+2	+1	+3	+2	Special face
4	+4	+2	+1	+4	+2	Hot lick
5	+5	+2	+1	+4	+3	
6	+6/+1	+3	+2	+5	+3	Hot lick 2
7	+7/+2	+3	+2	+5	+3	Wailin' solo
8	+8/+3	+3	+2	+6	+4	Hot lick 3
9	+9/+4	+4	+3	+6	+4	
10	+10/+5	+4	+3	+7	+5	Guitar god

Class Skills

The bassist's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Animal Empathy (Cha), Diplomacy (Cha), Knowledge (Int), Move Silently (Dex), Pep Talk (Wis), Read Lips (Int), Scram (Con), Spot (Wis), Swim (Str).

Skill Points at 1st level: (2 + Int modifier) × 4.
Skill Points at each additional level: 2 + Int modifier.

Class Features

These are the class features of a bass player.

Range: 15 feet + 5 feet per point of Constitution modifier.

Good Vibes: When playing bass, you can return 1d8 + your level in cool points to a target. The target of the good vibes must be within your range. You can do this a number of times per set equal to 1 + your Intelligence modifier (minimum 1).

Great Vibes: As Good Vibes, but the cool returned is 2d8 + your level.

Infectious Groove: When playing bass, all vibes you deal to a single target affect adjacent targets too.

Moby Vibes: As Good Vibes, but the cool returned is 3d8 + your level.

Oh Well: You can shrug off active bad vibes. You have DR 2 from active bad vibes.

Whatever: You can shrug off passive bad vibes. You have DR 2 from passive bad vibes.

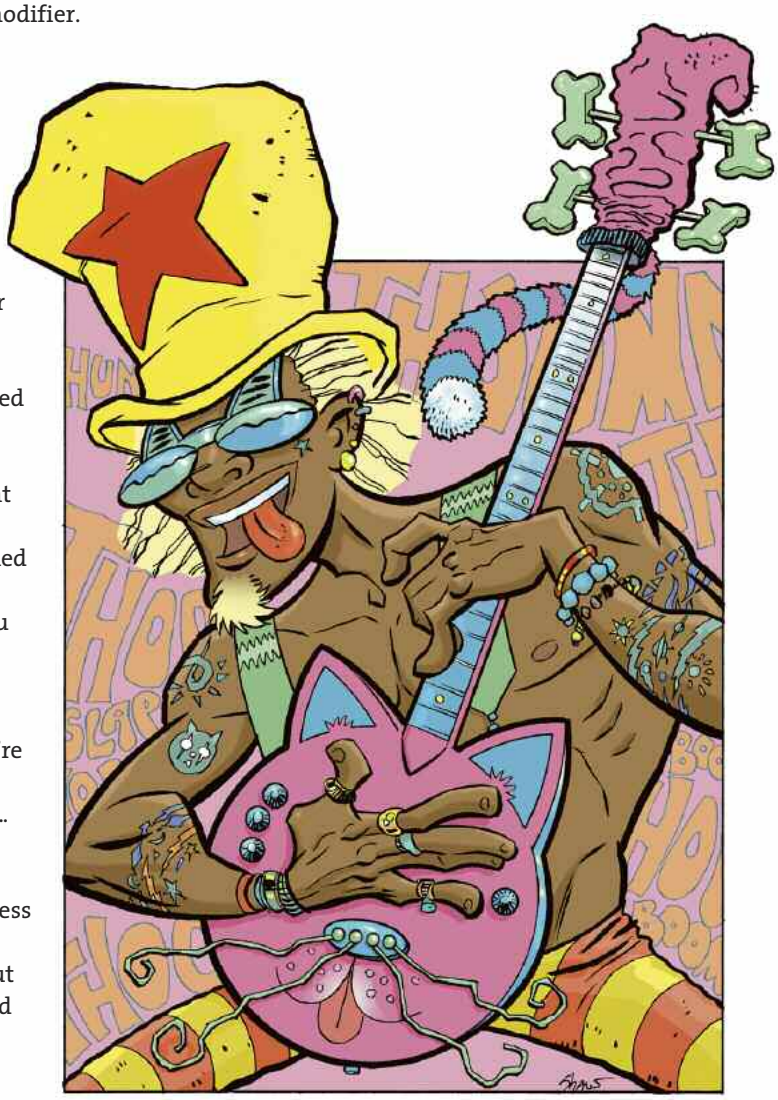
Nevermind: You've reached a point where you're so mellow, opponents have a hard time bringing you down at all. You have DR 4 from all bad vibes..

Drummer

You may be a little unfocused, but you're relentless with the rapid-fire beats. Bad things happen to drummers sometimes, but they usually come out okay. Drummers help the band stay together and on the beat. They can multitask pretty well, and can pick up the pace when things get slow.

Abilities: Charisma will help you the most, giving you a leg up from the multiple instruments you're trying to play at the same time. Wisdom will help you stay frosty behind the drum set with a better Defense and help you see what's going on around you, helping you keep everyone together.

Hit Die: d6



Stan Shaw

Table 2-3: The Bassist

Level	Base Perform Bonus	Defense	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special
1	+0	+2	+2	+2	+2	Good vibes
2	+1	+2	+3	+3	+3	
3	+2	+3	+3	+3	+3	Great vibes
4	+3	+3	+4	+4	+4	Infectious groove
5	+3	+4	+4	+4	+4	Moby vibes
6	+4	+4	+5	+5	+5	Oh well
7	+5	+5	+5	+5	+5	
8	+6/+1	+5	+6	+6	+6	Whatever
9	+6/+1	+6	+6	+6	+6	
10	+7/+2	+6	+7	+7	+7	Nevermind

Class Skills

The drummer's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Animal Empathy (Cha), Balance (Dex), Climb (Str), Craft (Int), Disable Device (Int), Disguise (Dex), Escape Artist (Dex), Hide (Dex), Intimidate (Str), Jump (Str), Scram (Con), Sleight of Hand (Dex), Read Lips (Int), Search (Int), Spot (Wis), Swim (Str).

Skill Points at 1st level: (4 + Int modifier) × 4.
Skill Points at each additional level: 4 + Int modifier.

Rey Lewis

Class Features

These are the class features of a drummer.

Range: 40 feet + 5 feet per point of Constitution modifier.

Ambidexterity: You get the Ambidexterity feat for free.

Extra Instrument: You also get the Extra Instrument feat because drummers are always hitting about 3 or 4 different things at once.

Lay Down a Rhythm: For the duration of one song, all band members get a +1 morale bonus to perform attempts. This ability works once per set.

Stay Together: Once per set, you can move any or all other band member's focuses to anywhere within your area of effect.

One-Man Band: You get this feat too.

Like You Mean It: Once per song you can double your range.

Drum Solo: In one song per set, you just go nuts. When your focus is adjacent to a target that is in your range, you deal double vibes.

Keyboardist

This is most likely a synthesizer (or two or three) but it also can be a pure acoustic piano. You could even play a harpsichord, but we wouldn't recommend it. A keyboardist fills in gaps and rounds out performances with smooth sounds and constant play. While other instruments might jump in or fade back, the keys are always playing, providing a counterpoint to guitar or a constant backdrop to the whole show.

Abilities: Intelligence will help you out the most, and powers many of your class abilities. Wisdom is also helpful for you to stay on top of all the action and see where to pitch in.

Hit Die: d6

Class Skills

The keyboard player's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Animal Empathy (Cha), Balance (Dex), Bluff (Cha), Climb (Str), Diplomacy (Cha), Disable Device (Int), Drive (Dex), Gather Information (Cha), H4XXor (Int), Hide (Dex), Knowledge (Int), Listen (Wis), Move Silently (Dex), Open Lock (Dex), Pep Talk (Wis), Scram (Con), Sleight of Hand (Dex), Read Lips (Int), Speak Language, Spot (Wis), Use Rope (Dex).

Table 2-4: The Drummer

Level	Base Perform Bonus	Defense	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special
1	+1	+1	+0	+1	+1	Ambidexterity, extra instrument
2	+2	+2	+0	+1	+1	Lay down a rhythm
3	+3	+2	+1	+2	+2	
4	+4	+3	+1	+2	+2	Stay together
5	+5	+3	+1	+3	+3	
6	+6/+1	+3	+2	+3	+3	One-man band
7	+7/+2	+4	+2	+3	+3	Like you mean it
8	+8/+3	+4	+2	+4	+4	
9	+9/+4	+5	+3	+4	+4	
10	+10/+5	+5	+3	+5	+5	Drum solo

Skill Points at 1st level: (8 + Int modifier) × 4.

Skill Points at each additional level: 8 + Int modifier.

Class Features

These are the class feature of a keyboard player.

Range: 20 feet + 5 feet per point of Constitution modifier.

Feelin' Groovy: Once per set, as a standard action, you can add a musical bonus to any band member's Defense equal to your Intelligence modifier. For instance, if your Intelligence modifier is +3, you may add +3 to Defense.

Background Noise: You've learned to be unobtrusive with your keyboard, so that people forget you're there. When active, no one in the audience will send bad vibes at you. This lasts until you reassert your presence by making a perform attempt on a target. You can use this ability once per set.

Good Vibes: When playing keys, you can return 1d8 + your level cool points to a target. The target of the good vibes must be within your range. You can do this a number of times per set equal to 1 + your Intelligence modifier (minimum 1).

Pick Up Slack: If a band member gets bummed, the keyboardist can cover for his or her absence by taking an extra partial action each round for the rest of the set.

On The One: As a free action, once per set, you can instantly move one other band member's focus to a square adjacent to your focus.

Background Noise 2: As Background Noise, but if you make a perform action, it remains active until the end of the song.

Great Vibes: As Good Vibes, but the cool returned is 2d8 + your level.

Keyboard Solo: In one song per set, you just go nuts. When your focus is adjacent to a target that is in your range, you deal double vibes.

Second Deck: For the duration of one song, you can have two focuses, moving and dealing vibes individually. Both focuses perform with all your bonuses.

DJ

A DJ can scratch and spin records to provide music samples and beats, filling out a band's sound. DJs do a little bit of keeping the beat, but their greatest asset is their electronic variety of sounds. Where a keyboard player imitates and manipulates instrumental sound, a DJ plays with every other kind of noise in the world, recombining things in fun, unexpected ways.

Abilities: Intelligence capitalizes on your strengths, giving you plenty of opportunities to capitalize on

Kyle S. Hunter

Table 2-4: The Keyboardist

Level	Base Perform Bonus	Defense	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special
1	+0	+2	+2	+2	+0	Feelin' groovy
2	+1	+2	+3	+3	+0	Background noise
3	+1	+3	+3	+3	+1	Good vibes
4	+2	+3	+4	+4	+1	Pick up slack
5	+2	+4	+4	+4	+1	On the one
6	+3	+4	+5	+5	+2	Background noise 2
7	+3	+5	+5	+5	+2	Great vibes
8	+4	+5	+6	+6	+2	
9	+4	+6	+6	+6	+3	Keyboard solo
10	+5	+6	+7	+7	+3	Second Deck

skills. After 3rd level, Dexterity can do double duty, adding to perform attempts and bumping up some key skills.

Cool Die: d4

Class Skills

The DJ's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Appraise (Int), Balance (Dex), Bluff (Cha), Climb (Str), Craft (Int), Disable Device (Int), Disguise (Dex), Drive (Dex), Escape Artist (Dex), H4XXor (Int), Innuendo (Wis), Knowledge (Int), Listen (Wis), Move Silently, (Dex), Open Lock (Dex), Pep Talk (Wis), Scram (Con), Sleight of Hand (Dex), Read Lips (Int), Search (Int), Spot (Wis), Use Rope (Dex).

Skill Points at 1st level: (8 + Int modifier) × 4.

Skill Points at each additional level: 8 + Int modifier.

Rey Lewis

Class Features

These are the class features of a DJ.

Range: 10 feet + 5 feet per point of Constitution modifier.

Sample: As a standard action, you can record sounds and play them on the fly. You can capture and reuse any vibes roll that occurred within your area of effect since your last action. For instance, if your guitarist scored a critical hit with a perform attempt and did 22 points of vibes to an opponent, and your area of effect overlapped with his, you could "sample" those 22 points, and use them again on another target. The sample must be used the round it was recorded, or the following one. Once used, the vibes are gone.

Tricky: You can substitute Dexterity for Charisma for performance purposes.

Sneak Up: DJs have so many options, they can totally catch listeners off guard. When you and another band member flank a target, you may deal extra vibes when you hit.

Special Effect: At 5th, 7th, 9th, and 10th levels, a DJ can choose one effect from the following list:

Line Up: At will, you can change your area of effect to a line with double your range.

Peripheral Envision: At will, you can change your area of effect to a 180-degree semicircular burst.

Drop A Beat: At will, you can change your area of effect to a full 360-degree burst. The diameter of the burst is equal to your range. The burst centers on your focus to begin with, but deviates like a grenade (*Player's Handbook* page 138).

Everybody Get Down: At will, you can change your area of effect to a full 360-degree burst centered on your focus. The diameter of the burst is half your range. You affect all spotted targets within the burst.

Horn Player

You can play all manner of wind-powered instruments. Normally, this will be something like trumpets, trombones, and saxophones, but it also includes more specialized instruments such as bagpipes or penny whistles. You are the range monster. There's not much of anywhere that people can't hear your music when you're really trying.

Table 2-5: The DJ

Level	Base Perform Bonus	Defense	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special
1	+0	+1	+1	+1	+2	Sample
2	+1	+2	+1	+1	+3	Sneak up +1d6
3	+2	+2	+2	+2	+3	Tricky
4	+3	+3	+2	+2	+4	Sneak up +2d6
5	+3	+3	+3	+3	+4	Special effect
6	+4	+3	+3	+3	+5	Sneak up +3d6
7	+5	+4	+3	+3	+5	Special effect
8	+6/+1	+4	+4	+4	+6	Sneak up +4d6
9	+6/+1	+5	+4	+4	+6	Special effect
10	+7/+2	+5	+5	+5	+7	Special effect

Abilities: Constitution really improves on your best feature, so pump it up. Charisma also helps drive it home once you've got it out there.

Hit Die: d6

Class Skills

The horn player's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Animal Empathy (Cha), Appraise (Int), Balance (Dex), Climb (Str), Diplomacy (Cha), Disguise (Dex), Hide (Dex), Innuendo (Wis), Intimidate (Str), Listen (Wis), Scram (Con), Search (Int), Speak Language, Spot (Wis), Swim (Str), Use Rope (Dex).

Skill Points at 1st level: (4 + Int modifier) × 4.

Skill Points at each additional level: 4 + Int modifier.

Class Features

These are the class features of a horn player.

Range: 50 feet + 5 feet per point of Constitution modifier.

Wall of Sound: As a full-round action once per set you can affect all targets in a rectangular area 30 feet long and 20 feet wide when playing a trumpet or trombone. Your focus must be adjacent to the 20 foot side.

Horn Solo: In one song per set, you bring down the house with a stunning solo. When your focus is adjacent to a target that is in your range, you deal double vibes.

Sultry Tone: When playing a saxophone, as a perform action, all members of the opposite sex (or who would otherwise find you attractive) in your range must make a Will saving throw (DC 10 + one half your level + plus Charisma modifier). Those who fail stop sending bad vibes.

Wall of Sound 2: As a full-round action once per song you can affect all targets in a rectangular area 60 feet long and 20 feet wide when playing a trumpet or trombone. Your focus must be adjacent to the 20 foot side.

Sultry Tone 2: As Sultry Tone, but members of any sex must make a Will save.

Wall of Sound 3: As a full-round action you can affect all targets in a rectangular area 90 feet long and 30 feet wide when playing a trumpet or trombone. Your focus must be adjacent to the 30 foot side.

Bring Down the House: As a perform action once per set, you can affect all targets in the room when playing any horn, whether or not you've spotted them.

Multiclass Characters

Multiclassing is a matter of a character picking up a different instrument and starting to learn it. It works exactly like multiclassing in D&D, but you never need to worry about an XP penalty. After you multiclass, your range is determined by the instrument you're using. So, if you're a multiclass bassist/guitarist with a 10 Con, your range is 15 feet when playing a bass and 30 feet when playing a guitar.

Stan Shaw

Table 2-6: The Horn Player

Level	Base Perform Bonus	Defense	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special
1	+0	+1	+2	+1	+0	Wall of sound
2	+1	+2	+3	+1	+0	Horn solo
3	+2	+2	+3	+2	+1	Sultry tone
4	+3	+2	+4	+2	+1	Wall of sound 2
5	+3	+3	+4	+3	+1	
6	+4	+3	+5	+3	+2	
7	+5	+3	+5	+3	+2	Sultry tone 2
8	+6/+1	+4	+6	+4	+2	Wall of sound 3
9	+6/+1	+4	+6	+4	+3	
10	+7/+2	+4	+7	+5	+3	Bring down the house

TRACK 3: THAT THING YOU DO

Superstar Deejay

Table 3–1: Skills lists skills available to *Hijinx* characters. Note that some key abilities might not correspond with D&D standards. See skill descriptions below for details.

NPC SKILLS

The following skills are available to NPCs, but never PCs:

FORGERY
REPAIR
WILDERNESS LORE

SKILL DESCRIPTIONS

If a *Hijinx* skill works differently than in the *Player's Handbook*, or if it doesn't exist there, we explain the finer points here. If it doesn't work differently, we didn't bother to rehash it here.

Animal Empathy: In addition to the things Animal Empathy normally lets you do, the *Hijinx* version lets you understand what animals are saying when they tug on your pants leg or jump up and down excitedly. This skill also encompasses everything you would do with the Handle Animal or Ride skills in a standard d20 game.

When deciding how hard it is to interpret an animal's behavior, think about how many words you need to get it across to another human. Simple ideas are two words, usually a noun and a verb, or a noun and an adjective. Involved ideas are no more than three words, usually including a second noun or even a preposition. Complex ideas can be up to four words and typically involve at least two nouns, and some not-easily-pantomimed verb. Animals cannot attempt to convey any idea more complex than that.

DC Idea Complexity

10	2-word simple ideas (follow me, viscount bad)
15	3-word involved ideas (Rufus in danger, monster behind you)
20	4-word complex ideas (gas leaking under door, Rufus trapped in cellar)

Bluff: You can't use Bluff to feint in combat, because there is no combat. Otherwise, it works like the book says it does.

Craft: Craft has no subcategories. Ranks in Craft represent your general artsy craftsiness, which allows you to do all kinds of stuff. The primary usefulness of the Craft skill is

C. Scott Morse

making T-shirts and merchandise and selling them at your shows. When you're just starting out and nobody wants to pay you to perform, selling crap with the band's name on it is a handy source of income.

Our system is a lot less complicated than the one in the *Player's Handbook*. Make your Craft check against DC 10. For every 1 point over 10, multiply the amount by $5. That's how much cash you make. So if your Craft check result is 15, you make $25. If you check result is 10 or less, you don't lose money, you just don't make any.

Disable Device: This skill lets you take things apart. It's especially useful for disabling electronic security systems and cameras.

Disguise: This skill is mostly useful during hijinx (see Track 6). It's Dexterity based because you usually have very little time to pull off a disguise when you're being chased around the manor house.

Drive: Everybody can turn the ignition and drive around in a car. Ranks in this skill let you do tricky things like jumps and high-speed chases with cars, boats, motorcycles, or any vehicle that works on a similar premise. This doesn't cover more complicated vehicles like airplanes, helicopters, or experimental machinery.

Forgery: This skill is only available to NPCs. Only a villain would do something rotten like this, not good, well meaning, rock 'n' roll kids. Use Search to spot a forgery if one comes up.

Gather Information: This skill allows you to pick up information about a venue, including inside info on what kind of music a judge likes to hear. This information is very helpful when planning a music set (see Performance in Track 6: Rocking the House).

H4XX0R: This is "hacking" if you don't read 1337. This skill is basically Gather Information with a computer. It lets you do research and scope people out on the 'Net.

TABLE 3-1: SKILLS

Skill	Voc	Gui	Bas	Dru	Key	DJ	Hor
Animal Empathy (Cha)	•	X	•	•	•	X	•
Appraise (Int)	•	X	X	X	X	•	•
Balance (Dex)	X	X	X	•	•	•	•
Bluff (Cha)	•	•	X	X	•	•	X
Climb (Str)	X	X	X	•	•	•	•
Craft (Int)	X	X	X	•	X	•	X
Diplomacy (Cha)	•	X	•	X	•	X	•
Disable Device (Int)	X	•	X	•	•	•	X
Disguise (Dex)	•	X	X	•	X	•	•
Drive (Dex)	•	•	X	X	•	•	X
Escape Artist (Dex)	X	•	X	•	X	•	X
Gather Information (Cha)	•	X	X	X	•	X	X
H4XX0R (Int)	X	X	X	X	•	•	X
Hide (Dex)	X	X	X	•	•	X	•
Innuendo (Wis)	•	•	X	X	X	•	•
Intimidate (Str)	•	X	X	•	X	X	•
Jump (Str)	•	•	X	•	X	X	X
Knowledge (Int)	X	X	•	X	•	•	X
Listen (Wis)	•	X	X	X	•	•	•
Move Silently (Dex)	X	X	•	X	•	•	X
Open Lock (Dex)	X	X	X	X	•	•	X
Pep Talk (Wis)	•	X	•	X	•	•	X
Read Lips (Int)	•	X	•	•	•	•	X
Scram (Con)	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Search (Int)	X	X	X	•	X	•	•
Sense Motive (Wis)	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Sleight of Hand (Dex)	X	•	X	•	•	•	X
Speak Language (None)	•	X	X	X	•	X	•
Spot (Wis)	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Swim (Str)	X	X	•	•	X	X	•
Use Rope (Dex)	•	X	X	X	•	•	•

• = class skill, X = cross-class skill

Innuendo: In addition to the stuff Innuendo normally does, it also helps you communicate with the band during a set when you can't really talk.

If you want to propose a change to your set list in the middle of a set, or point out a target to a fellow band member, make a successful DC 10 Innuendo check to communicate your message effectively. Note that this does not mean what you propose happens. This just allows you to make the suggestion with a raised eyebrow or meaningful glance. Further Innuendo checks can continue the "conversation," but a failed check ends it. Anyone can try an Innuendo check, but no retries are allowed.

Intimidate: Intimidate is Strength based because big, strong people are more intimidating.

Jump: Might as well jump. Go ahead, jump.

Knowledge: Knowledge has no subcategories. Ranks in Knowledge represent your general booksmarts, in which case you know all kinds of stuff. This skill never covers areas that are only available as NPC skills. Your GM will be the final arbiter of whether or not some question involves booksmarts.

Open Lock: This skill requires no special tools. You'll probably be using hairpins or credit cards to pop locks, which work just fine.

Pep Talk: This is similar to the Heal skill. A successful DC 15 Pep Talk check restores the Pep Talker's level in cool points. You can make only one attempt per character in each session.

Read Lips: In addition to normal benefits, if you have 5 ranks in this skill, you gain a +2 synergy bonus to perform attempts when you must lip sync your music.

Repair: This skill is only available to NPCs. Machines only break down as heavy-handed plot devices. This requires you to go into town to find an NPC who can fix the van/Ferris wheel/wheat thresher/what-have-you.

Scram: This skill is used when running away from villains or a horde of fans (see Running in Track 6).

Search: In addition to all the normal things Search does, You also use it to pick out forgeries if a villain is trying to pass one off on you.

Sense Motive: Nobody has this as a class skill. You kids are terrible judges of character.

Sleight of Hand: This lets you palm objects, hide small things, plant objects on other people, and do cheap magic tricks. Theoretically, this skill could also be used to pick someone's pocket, but only a shady no-goodnik would try something like that, which you aren't (though an NPC might be).

Sleight of Hand is also good for flash, stage tricks that impress the audience through showiness. Flash is a standard action. Make a successful Sleight of Hand check opposed by an opponent's Sense Motive check. If successful, your next perform attempt against a single target ignores his or her natural Defense bonus. The perform attempt must be made within the same song as the flash.

Speak Language: The world is full of many different fascinating languages, but for simplicity's sake, we're only going to deal with a few of them. This list is totally unfair to many cultures and ethnic groups, including some of the ones that are on it. But if you're getting mad about this kind of thing, what, are you not paying attention? This game hasn't conformed to reality since paragraph one. Why are you getting all nitpicky now?

English is your native language. After that, you can pick up:

ARABIC	CHINESE
FRENCH	GERMAN
INDIAN	JAPANESE
RUSSIAN	SPANISH

Spot: In addition to Spot's regular job, you use this skill to pick targets out of a crowd at a performance (see Performance in Track 6: Rocking the House).

Swim: Normal Swim rules require you to make a bunch of Swim checks. If you fail then you start making Constitution checks. If you fail again, you have three rounds until you drown.

The only difference here is that instead of drowning, you wash up somewhere away from the rest of the band, probably at the feet of the villain. Or at least a mysterious stranger. Use the downtime to get drinks for everybody until the GM brings you back in.

Use Rope: This skill is useful when tying up villains for the police or setting complex villain traps (see Hijinx in Track 6) which always seem to involve rope.

Wilderness Lore: This skill is available only to NPCs. If you're lost and hungry in the wilderness, a park ranger or an eskimo or somebody will be along pretty soon. It's good form to act worried and pensive like they won't be, though.

HOUSE DEEJAY

TRACK 4: FEATS DON'T FAIL ME NOW!

Feats work just like they do in D&D. You get one at 1st level, another at 3rd, another at 6th, and a final one at 9th level. Since you're a human, you also get an extra feat at 1st level.

Hijinx introduces a new type of feat: Personality. Personality feats represent the broad personality type you fall into, which makes you easy to sum up and conveniently gives you some bonuses. Personality feats can be taken only at 1st level, and a character may have only one personality feat. Only one character in a band may have any specific personality feat at any given time. For instance, a band may contain only one character with The Sensitive One feat, until that character drops out. Then you can get another one.

You can take a feat multiple times only if the feat's description says you can.

NEW FEATS

BETTER SAVING THROW [GENERAL]

One of your saving throws is better.

Benefit: Add a +2 bonus to your Fortitude, Reflex, or Will save. You can take this feat as many times as you want.

BURST OF SOUND [GENERAL]

You can change the shape of your area of effect from a cone to a burst.

Prerequisite: Base Perform Bonus +4 or higher.

Benefit: As a standard action, you may change your area of effect from a cone to a burst with a radius equal to your range. The center of the burst is on your focus.

FASTER FOCUS [GENERAL]

You can move your focus around the room faster, allowing you to get to more targets in less time.

Benefit: Your focus can move at 40 feet as a move action instead of 30 feet.

FAST HANDS [GENERAL]

When you convert an audience member, you can keep going.

Prerequisite: Power Chord.

Benefit: If you reduce a target to 0 cool, you may immediately take an extra perform attempt with the same instrument at the same bonus as the previous one. The new target must be within your current area of effect. You can only get one extra perform attempt this way.

GO GET 'EM TIGER [GENERAL]

You're really good at giving pep talks.

Benefit: You may use the Pep Talk skill twice per character per game session, regardless of failure. This feat may be taken multiple times. Each time allows another possible Pep Talk attempt.

HOOK-UP ACTION [GENERAL]

Pick two skills that seem related for some reason, like Listen and Spot or Jump and Climb or whatever. You're extra good at both of them. Feel free to think up a descriptive name for their relationship like "Alertness" or "Athletic."

Benefit: You get a +2 synergy bonus to checks on each skill. You may take this feat as many times as you want, but it can affect a skill only once. For instance, you couldn't take it for Diplomacy and Bluff and then again for Bluff and Intimidate.

LONGER RANGE [GENERAL]

Through rehearsal, you've managed to build your chops for a larger field of effect when playing.

Prerequisite: Base Perform Bonus +3.

Benefit: You add 5 feet to your range.

D&D FEATS

These feats are conceptually different, but mechanically the same as in the *Player's Handbook*. For the sake of the genre we renamed some of them for you, but otherwise it wasn't worth rewriting all the same words you already own. Make all the appropriate terminology substitutions, and again, everywhere it says "Strength" in D&D, change it to "Charisma" for *Hijinx*.

D&D	HIJINX
Dodge	Good Dancer
Expertise	Rein It In
Improved Critical	Where It Hurts
Improved Two-Weapon Fighting	One-Man Band
Power Attack	Power Chord
Toughness	Too Cool
Two-Weapon Fighting	Extra Instrument
Weapon Focus	Private Lessons

NEVILLE GUPTA: *THE EXOTIC ONE*

"NAILS" MAHONEY: *THE TOUGH ONE*

C. Scott Morse

SALLY CINNAMON: *THE DITZY ONE*

JAWAHAR, GOD OF DRUMMERS: *THE WACKY ONE*

MOUTH HARP [GENERAL]

You can play the harmonica sort of like you know what you're doing.

Benefit: Your vibes with harmonica are 1d4+1 instead of 1d4. Further, if you play a harmonica and take lead, you can change the type of one song during the song as a standard action. For instance, if you saw that a dance song wasn't working after your first round, you could change the song to radio-friendly on your action.

MAD SKILLZ [GENERAL]

Choose a skill. You're really good at it.

Benefit: You get a +3 bonus with all skill checks when using your special skill. You can take this feat multiple times, but its effects do not stack. Each time you take the feat it applies to a new skill.

PEDAL AIR [GENERAL]

When you warm up before taking off, you run much faster.

Benefit: If you spend one round doing nothing (peddling the air) before you make a Scram check, you reduce the chaser's threshold values by 1.

PET [GENERAL]

You have an animal (no larger than a small dog) which hangs around the band. It is of above-average animal intelligence, although it cannot speak and does not have opposable thumbs.

Benefit: A pet can deliver messages, chew through ropes, and fetch small items such as keys or ancient scepters. Pets also have an unerring sense of danger, and can attempt to warn their owners when something bad is happening. (Owners must use the Animal Empathy skill to translate). Finally, a pet always knows who the villain is the moment he or she walks into the room. However, no one pays attention, so it doesn't matter.

RELATED [GENERAL]

You're related to someone else in the band, and that bond lets you share in each other's troubles.

Benefit: This close familial bond grants you the ability to take half the bad vibes from one specified character during one song per set, halving the vibes that character receives. You do not need to choose the song before the set begins. You can take this feat multiple times. Each time it makes you related to another band member.

Special: If two characters take this feat and specify each other as related, they can each halve the bad vibes taken during one song with a DC 20 Will save. For instance, if Julio and Hector are related reciprocally, then they may together pick one song from a set (probably when they notice a crowd member is being particularly difficult). They roll their Will saves at the beginning of the song. Each brother who succeeds at the Will save takes only half the vibes he otherwise would have taken during the song.

SONGWRITER [GENERAL]

You can craft especially good tunes.

Benefit: Choose one type of song. When you take lead for that type of song, you gain +2 to vibes with the song.

Spunky Pet [General]

Your pet will attempt to defend you if you're in trouble.

Prerequisite: Pet.

Benefit: Once per session, a pet can grapple a villain for 1d4 rounds by biting the villain's rear, tangling up the villain's hair, or causing something ungainly to fall on him or her. A grappled villain cannot move, attack, or use special abilities, and loses his Wisdom bonus to Defense while trying to get the pet off.

The Athletic One [Personality]

You're real strong and you usually wear sports clothes.

Benefit: Jump is a class skill. In addition, you gain a +2 innate bonus to Strength.

The Brainy One [Personality]

You walk around with textbooks and explain situations with too many syllables. You probably have glasses.

Benefit: Knowledge is a class skill. In addition, you receive a +2 innate bonus with Use Rope skill checks and a +1 innate bonus to Disable Device skill checks.

The Cowardly One [Personality]

You're easily freaked out and always ready to run.

Benefit: Hide is a class skill. In addition, you get a +2 innate bonus to Scram checks when running away from a villain because you knew this was going to happen, man. You knew it.

The Ditzy One [Personality]

You're frequently off in your own world, which is just fine, because it's a nicer place than the real world.

Benefit: Animal Empathy is a class skill. In addition, you get a +1 innate bonus to Defense since you're not really paying attention.

The Ethnic One [Personality]

You seem all exotic and stuff.

Benefit: You get one extra language and a +3 innate bonus to Diplomacy skill checks thanks to your disarming combination of naivete and suave.

The Sensitive One [Personality]

You have a sensitive artist's soul. No, really.

Benefit: Pep Talk is a class skill. You gain a +1 innate bonus to Gather Information checks. You also gain a +1 innate bonus to perform attempts when taking lead on a soulful song.

The Sexy One [Personality]

You're totally hot.

Benefit: You're good looking, so you never bothered with skills. Everything you want to buy is 10% cheaper, though.

The Tough One [Personality]

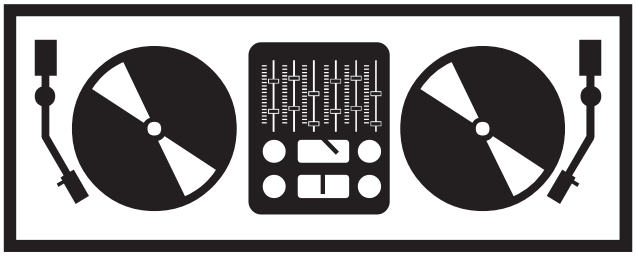
You've got that tribal tat and a pouty look that says you're a bad boy/girl.

Benefit: Intimidate is a class skill. In addition, you get a +1 innate bonus to perform attempts when taking lead on a power song.

The Wacky One [Personality]

You're just really out there. You might be merely kooky, or if everyone's okay with it, you might not even be technically human. You might be an alien or a big raccoon or a robot. No one seems to think it's strange that you're not human, and you use all the benefits and game mechanics of a human. But it's weird, all right.

Benefit: You gain a +2 innate bonus to a saving throw of your choice because you're strangely resilient. In addition, you get a +1 bonus to perform when taking lead on a novelty song.



Other Stuff

Here's the finishing touches on character creation.

Height, Weight, Appearance

Pick how you want to look. Alternately, roll 1d6 three times on the following table for height, build, and hair color:

Roll	Height	Build	Hair Color
1–2	Taller	Thin	Brunette
3–4	Average	Medium	Blond
5–6	Shorter	Heavy	Redhead

Alignment

You're good. Everybody's good unless they're villains, in which case they're evil. As good characters, it's your duty to investigate and prevent evil-doing wherever you find it. Since nearly everyone else is also good, they'll understand and appreciate your help. Refreshing, isn't it?

This doesn't mean you can do whatever you want. You'll still get shooed out of an area labeled "Employees Only." But if you attempt to explain yourself, they won't press charges.

TRACK 5: GETTING IN GEAR

Equipment makes a good band sound even better. Every band starts out with a basic package of equipment that includes mics, cheap amps, and cruddy speakers that are better than nothing (but only a little). Enough to get the point across. Band members must buy their instruments and threads individually, but maybe you can pool your extra money to start with a little better equipment if you're lucky.

STARTING CASH

Consult the chart below to find out how much scratch you start with. Roll the number of dice and multiply by the numbers listed.

CLASS	CASH
Vocalist	3d6
Guitarist	3d6 × 10
Bassist	4d8 × 10
Drummer	6d10 × 10
Keyboards	5d4 × 10
DJ	6d4 × 10
Horn Player	5d6 × 10

If you don't want to fiddle with this, ask the GM if you can just take the used version of your instrument and a lucky shirt as a "standard package" and call it good.

INSTRUMENTS

Used instruments are the kind of instruments you find at garage sales, second-hand music stores, or in your older brother's closet. They work, and they're good for banging around, but they're beginner instruments.

New, decent instruments are the kind you buy new off the shelf. They're in good condition, and they're workhorse instruments that can last you a few years.

New, bitchin' instruments are getting pricey, but you're buying quality. The playability and prestige of these instruments shows through in their performance—and yours.

New, dream instruments are the kind you stare at longingly in the high-class music store window. They're like, the best.

Instrument: The name of the instrument. Duh.

Cost: This is how many dollars one of these instruments costs.

Vibes: This is how many and what kind of dice you roll to deal vibes to the unwashed masses.

Critical: You know how criticals work.

Range Bonus: If an instrument gives you a range bonus, it's listed here in feet.

Type: This is the type of instrument, which might affect a target in different ways.

INSTRUMENT DESCRIPTIONS

Guitar: Your basic six-string.

Bass: A four-string bass guitar.

Doubleneck Bass: This can be played by a bassist with no problem. It's not really that much better, but it looks cool.

Drum Set: A couple of snares, a bass drum, a crash cymbal.

Cymbals: Hi-hat cymbals.

Keyboard: Your basic set of keys with a decent amount of memory and voices.

Turntables: #1 and #2. Comes with a pile of records.

Trumpet/Trombone: These are two different brass instruments, but they basically do the same thing. Cuz, like, if you have a ska band, you might need both.

Alto Sax/Tenor Sax: These are different woodwind instruments that do the same basic thing.

Harmonica: Anybody with a free mouth can play the harmonica. Harmonicas have a range of 20 feet, regardless of who's playing. Harmonicas become slightly more useful when used with the Mouth Harp feat.

Tambourine: Anybody with a free hand can play a tambourine. Tambourines have a range of 30 feet, regardless of who's playing.

THREADS

Threads are a vital part of putting on a good show. They help you look better for one thing. But more importantly, they help you feel better. Wearing the right clothes helps you get into the rock 'n' roll mindset, making it tougher for the critics and cynics to step on your proverbial blue suede shoes. You can wear only one outfit at a time, and one kind of accessory at a time, but you can wear both an outfit and accessory simultaneously.

Cost: This is how much it'll set you back.

Defense Bonus: This measures just how much cooler you'll feel wearing the duds. This stacks with your class Defense bonus.

Maximum Wisdom Bonus: Once you're wearing a gold jumpsuit with your name across the back in spangles, there's a ceiling on just how much Wisdom is seriously going to help your emotional defenses. The more glamorous you look, the harder it is to keep a clear head about the whole thing.

Threads Check Penalty: The more fabulous you look, the harder it is to run around and do physical stuff without ruining it. This penalty applies to Balance, Climb, Disguise, Escape Artist, Hide, Jump, Move Silently, Scram, and Swim checks made while wearing your threads. When you try to do one of these skills in threads and fail, your threads are ruined: torn, dirty, and/or smelly. You lose all benefit from wearing them and must buy new ones. Alternately, you can ignore the penalty, but your threads are automatically ruined. Threads check penalties are cumulative with outfits and accessories.

Threads Descriptions

Lucky Shirt: This is the one thing you know you look good in. It doesn't have to be a shirt. It can be a scarf or a shade of lipstick or ass-kicking boots.

Cool Outfit: This is a whole ensemble that matches and looks good together and makes you look good.

Table 5-1: Instruments

Instrument	Cost	Vibes	Critical	Range Bonus	Type
Used					
Guitar	100	1d10	19–20/×2	+0	String
Bass	100	1d8	×3	+0	String
Drum Set	200	1d8	×2	+5	Percussion
Cymbals	50	1d6	×2	+0	Percussion
Keyboard	100	1d6	×4	+0	Electronic
Turntables	150	1d8	×2	+0	Electronic
Trumpet/trombone	80	1d8	×2	+5	Wind
Alto/tenor sax	75	2d4	×2	+0	Wind
New, decent					
Guitar	500	1d10	19–20/×2	+5	String
Bass	500	1d8	×3	+5	String
Drum Set	750	1d8	×2	+10	Percussion
Cymbals	200	1d6	×2	+5	Percussion
Keyboard	500	1d6	×4	+5	Electronic
Turntables	650	1d8	×2	+5	Electronic
Trumpet/trombone	400	1d8	×2	+10	Wind
Alto/tenor sax	350	2d4	×2	+5	Wind
Tambourine*	5	1d3	×2	+0	Percussion
Harmonica*	10	1d4	×2	+0	Wind
New, bitchin'					
Guitar	2,000	2d6	19–20/×2	+10	String
Bass	2,000	1d10	×3	+10	String
Doubleneck Bass	2,500	2d4	×3	+15	String
Drum Set	4,000	1d10	×2	+15	Percussion
Cymbals	1,000	1d8	×2	+10	Percussion
Keyboard	1,200	1d8	×4	+10	Electronic
Turntables	2,500	1d10	×2	+10	Electronic
Trumpet/trombone	1,500	1d10	×2	+20	Wind
Alto/tenor sax	1,500	2d6	×2	+10	Wind
New, dream					
Guitar	10,000	2d6	18–20/×2	+20	String
Bass	8,000	1d12	×3	+20	String
Drum Set	14,000	1d10	×3	+30	Percussion
Cymbals	3,000	1d8	×2	+25	Percussion
Keyboard	7,000	2d4	×4	+15	Electronic
Turntables	9,000	1d12	×2	+10	Electronic
Trumpet/trombone	4,000	1d12	×2	+40	Wind
Alto/tenor sax	4,000	2d6	×2	+30	Wind

**see item listing for special rules*

Glam Outfit: This is stage clothing and hair and makeup and everything. The entire band might even be coordinated at this point.

Total Rock 'n' Roll Look: Sequined jumpsuits, live snakes, dental floss, anything outrageous and appealing falls into this category. This will only look good on stage. Off stage you look sort of ridiculous. It's probably not even all that comfortable. But in the lights, you look like royalty, baby.

Funky Jewelry: Again, this isn't strictly jewelry. It can be a big amulet or a hair clip or an eyebrow ring. Whatever it is, it's distinctive and attention-getting.

Awesome Jewelry: Like funky jewelry, but more flashy and expensive. And more of it.

Ears For Hats: You know that's where it's at.

Changing Out of Threads

In case it's important, it'll take you one round per point of Defense bonus to get out of your threads and into normal clothes. The exception is ears for hats, which pop right off.

Equipment

To boost your range, increase your perform bonus, or spin some effects into the mix, you'll eventually want to spend your hard-earned cabbage on better equipment than the bargain basement stuff you started out on. The initial outlay of cash for equipment also covers roadies and tech guys to schlep it around and make it work.

Equipment Descriptions

Amps: Amps give you bonuses to hit. Amps come in three sizes: +1, +2, or +3. Each level of amp corresponds to a speaker size. If you use a bigger amp than its corresponding level of speaker, you'll blow out the speaker at the end of the set. An amp works for only one band member.

Monitors: Monitors let you know how you're doing. With decent monitors, you don't have to hustle your focus back to the stage to send good vibes to fellow band members. You can shift your focus immediately to the monitor and commence sending good vibes to your krew.

Speakers: Speakers allow you to start your focus wherever a speaker is, and can give you an initial boost on your first round of playing. The boost depends on how big the speaker is. Unlike amps, one set of speakers can work for everyone in the band.

Normal Speakers: This set of speakers fits in your van.

Big Speakers: These speakers are big enough that you need roadies and union guys to haul them around and set them up. Your focus can start up to 30 feet away from big speakers.

Giant Speakers: These speakers are bigger than you. They totally rock. Your focus can start up to 60 feet away from giant speakers.

Spotlights: You have spotlights and light techs to use them. In a performance, spotlights give you a +2 equipment bonus to Spot checks when you scan the audience.

Mute: A mute lets a horn player muffle and distort a horn's sound in interesting ways. In one song per set, a mute allows a horn player to perform as if he or she had the Power Chord feat, even without meeting the prerequisites.

Extra Memory: An extra memory card lets a DJ or keyboardist overlap two different areas of effect if they have access to more than one. For instance, a DJ could make both a line and a semicircular burst emanate from the same focus at the same time.

Bag of Sticks: This bag of sticks with weird-looking business ends lets a drummer invert the cone that makes up his or her area of effect, so that the long end is centered on his or her focus.

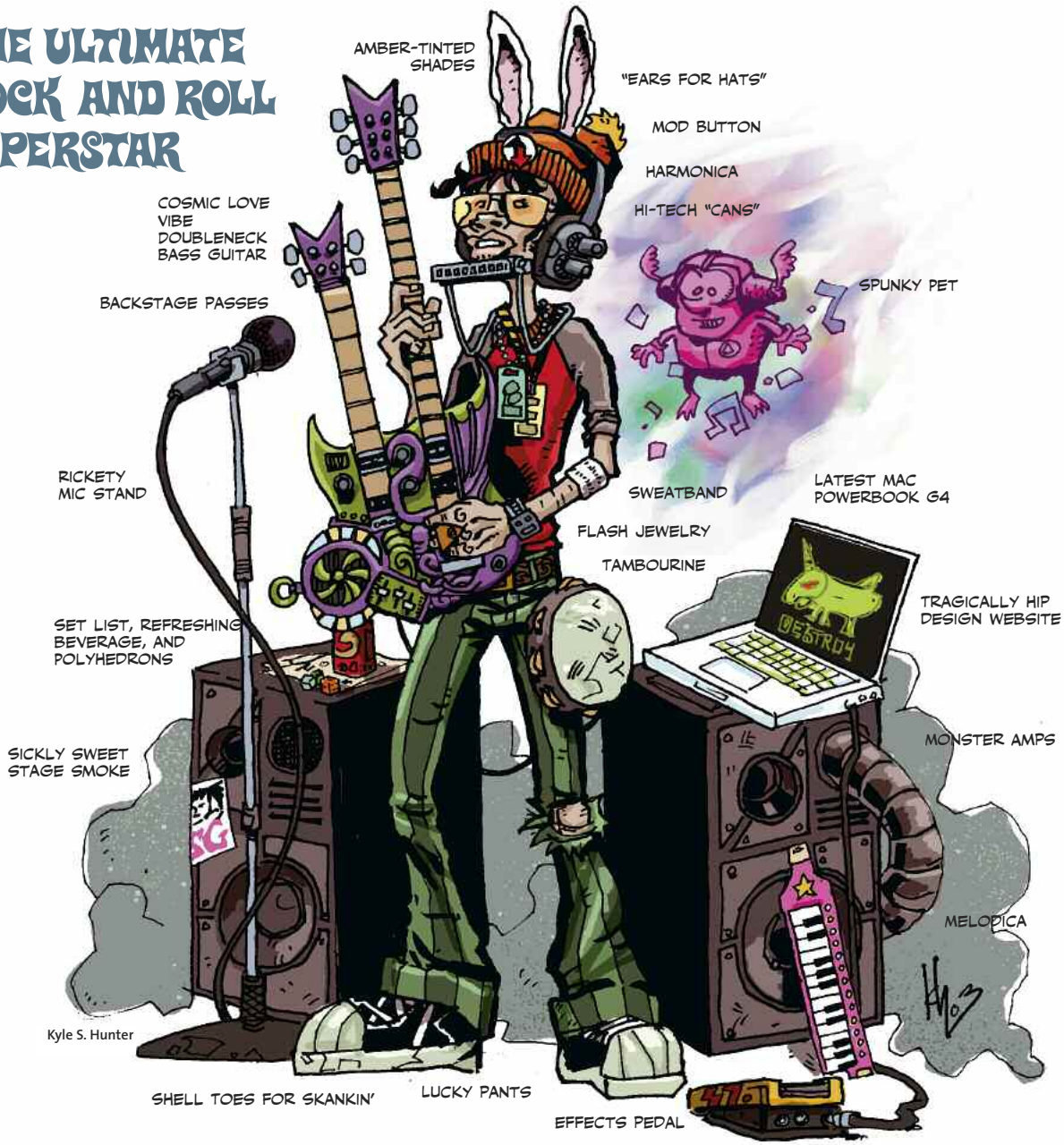
Vocal Modulator: By using this box, vocalists can make their voices sound weird and cool, negating cover bonuses.

Wa-Wa Pedal: In one song per set, someone playing a string instrument can use this pedal to modulate the sound so that targets receive no Defense bonus from class levels.

Table 5-2: Equipment

Item	Cost	Effect
+1 Amp	$1,000	Bonus to perform, corresponds to normal speakers.
+2 Amp	$4,000	Bonus to perform, corresponds to big speakers.
+3 Amp	$9,000	Bonus to perform, corresponds to giant speakers.
Monitors	$750	Lets you send good vibes to band members more easily.
Speakers	—	—
Normal	$1,000	Allows focus to start at speakers.
Big	$3,000	Allows focus to start up to 30 feet away from speakers.
Giant	$6,000	Allow focus to start up to 60 feet away from speakers.
Spotlights	$500	Bonus to Spot checks.
Mute	$150	Gives Power Chord feat.
Bag of Sticks	$175	Alters the shape of the drummer's range.
Vocal Modulator	$250	Negates cover.
Extra Memory	$200	Gives electronic instrument players more range options.
Wa-Wa Pedal	$500	Vibes from stringed instruments skip over class Defense bonus.
Fan Club	$50	Gives you good vibes.
Earplugs	$20	Gives a cover bonus.

THE ULTIMATE ROCK AND ROLL SUPERSTAR



Fan Club: These loyal fans will give you the good vibes you need to keep going during a show. Groups of fans show up when you give them free tickets or backstage passes. Once during a set, one band member can appeal to a group of fans and receive 1d8+1 good vibes. Multiple groups may come to the same show, of course. Your fan club must be "re-incentivized" to come to subsequent shows.

Earplugs: These high-quality plugs give their wearer a 50% cover bonus against perform attempts.

TABLE 5-8: THREADS

Threads	Cost	Defense Bonus	Maximum Wis Bonus	Threads Check Penalty
Outfits				
Lucky Shirt	$10	+1	+5	-2
Cool Outfit	$250	+3	+3	-4
Glam Outfit	$750	+5	+1	-6
Total Rock 'n' Roll Look	$2,000	+6	+0	-8
Accessories				
Funky Jewelry	$50	+1	+5	-1
Awesome Jewelry	$500	+2	+3	-5
Ears For Hats	$10,000	+5	—	-3

TRACK 6: ROCK THE HOUSE

Hijinx is all about music and having fun. You solve problems by playing your axe, not swinging it. So no fighting.

Instead, *Hijinx* has two distinct methods of interaction with NPCs. The first is performing. This is where you put on your cool threads, pick up your instruments, and go try to make some more fans by playing tunes and winning them over. Performing uses many of the same mechanics as normal d20 combat, but it's different enough that you're going to want to actually read this chapter.

The second method of interaction is when you're on adventures. You won't have your instruments then, as you creep around abandoned theaters, swampy graveyards, or "haunted" castles trying to unravel mysteries or help out friends you just met 20 minutes ago. In this case, when the false caliph's goons find you, you've really only got one option. Beat feet. If you get a moment to catch your breath though, you might get to turn the tables with some hijinx.

PERFORMING

Here's where we set you straight on how to perform for the throng of soon-to-be fans.

BEFORE THE SHOW

If you've got time, you might want to ask around and see what you can learn. Use Gather Information or H4XXor skill checks to find out any oddities about the venue and if anyone notable's gonna be in the audience. It totally pays to do your homework first because the GM might drop some clues on what songs might go over well, or what songs to stay away from. For instance, if you succeed at your Gather Information check, you might catch wind that Armond Q. Griffin, the fatcat record exec, will be at the show and has decided that ballads will be in this winter. Therefore, he will take half damage from power songs, but double damage from soulful songs. Stuff like that.

No doubt, you'll find some surprises once the show gets started, but at least you'll have a little more info.

ARRANGE YOUR SET

In a standard set, you play four songs. Each song consists of three rounds, making a standard set 12 rounds long. Your GM might occasionally create situations where you play more or fewer songs, and you might not get any warning, so assume a standard set unless you hear otherwise.

Choose the songs for your set from the following list of song types. You can only do one of each type in a single set.

- Catchy
- Dance
- Novelty (includes covers and holiday songs)
- Political (includes any song with, like, a deeper meaning)
- Power
- Radio-friendly
- Soulful

We're sure you're very clever and can think of a song that doesn't fit any of these categories. Too bad. You're not playing that one.

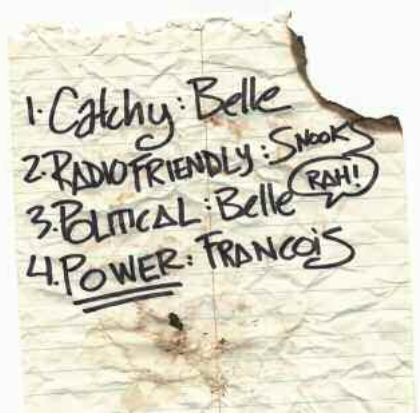
TAKING LEAD

In addition to choosing songs for your set, you also need to declare one band member as the lead for each song. The lead is in the spotlight and does the most "work" in a particular song, as far as stage antics and milking the crowd are concerned. You might gain some bonuses for taking lead (depending on your feat and class choices), but you're also the preferred target for every opponent in the room, whether or not you've spotted them.

The GM is the final arbiter of who an audience member will direct his or her bad vibes toward. However, without provocation, audience members will heap their bad vibes on whoever's taking lead, as the most visible person on stage. You could have one person take lead on every song, but it's easier on an individual if you take turns, or at least give your main lead a break.

THE SET LIST

Now assemble your set based on your strengths (according to music style, class abilities, and feats), and on what you know about your audience. Write down your set list in the order you'll be playing your songs, and decide who's going to take lead on each song.



Your set list might look something like this:

Dave Crosland

Put it in the middle of the table so everybody can see it. You're ready to roll. Dice, that is.

Play to Your Audience

The majority of people at your show came because they wanted to. Sadly, not everybody's that way. A surprising number of people go to rock 'n' roll shows for any number of reasons besides listening to the music. You've got your work cut out for you. Some of these unconverted masses may be people who came to the show, but aren't all that thrilled by what they've heard so far. Some may be couples making out. Some may be bored parental chaperones. Some might be religious groups protesting. Whatever. Your tunes need to be more infectious than their distraction. But to win them over, you have to find them first.

Initiative

Roll initiative to see who gets to send out vibes first. Nobody's ever flat-footed or surprised, it's just a race to see who goes first.

Spot Your Targets

On your first round, as a free action, you make a Spot check to scan the crowd for people who aren't into it. We'll call them targets, because you're aiming to win them over with the power of your righteous sound. Targets are scattered throughout the audience, and have a variety of competing interests. You want them to have one interest. Your music. How do you do that? You need to make them lose their cool.

Cool

Everybody's got some amount of cool. You try to keep your cool, but eventually, something's going to happen to make you lose it. In a performance situation, you're using your vibes to overcome people's defenses and get them to lose their cool and admit that your music is really great. Once they've totally lost their cool, they'll be dancing, singing along, and joining your email list.

Vibes

The way people affect each other's cool is by sending out vibes. Vibes are the unseen waves of influence people use to affect each other. Everybody has the capacity to send out vibes, and rockers do it every time they play. Vibes work more or less like damage in D&D. You send out vibes when you play, and on a few other occasions. People trying to pull you down will be sending back bad vibes.

Bad Vibes

No matter how good you know you are, people frequently don't believe in you or your music. These NPCs often send bad vibes at the band. These bad vibes can rattle your nerves, bring you down, and make you lose your cool on stage. Sometimes they're actively sending out these vibes to try to bring you down, and sometimes they're just passively doing it because they're not paying attention. Either way, they're gonna totally harsh your mellow if you don't win them over.

There are five different kinds of bad vibes: angry, bored, distracted, jealous, and snooty.

Angry (active): These vibes are sent by someone who's openly hostile to you. Examples of someone who sends out angry vibes include outraged parents or Herr Showpenhower, famous rock 'n' roll music hater.

Bored (passive): Someone who's jaded or just full of ennui sends out bored vibes. Examples include the heard-it-all-before sound tech at the club or angsty 20-somethings fighting the battle of who could care less.

Distracted (passive): Distracted vibes come from people who think there's something more important going on than your music. Examples include amorous couples or that guy in the back talking on his cell phone.

Jealous (active): Anyone who, deep down, wants to be on stage instead of the band sends out jealous vibes.

Examples include rival bands in the crowd or the washed-up/wannabe music critic.

Snooty (active): Snooty vibes are sent by people who think they're better than the band. Examples include fatcat record execs and high-class opera afficionados.

Good Vibes

Good vibes restore your cool when you're getting low. Fans, your manager, and most importantly, fellow band members can send you good vibes and help you keep your cool. Good vibes can't give you back more cool points than you lost in the first place.

Losing Your Cool

If cool points ever drop to 0, it's known as losing your cool. This is good when it happens to audience members. That means they're converted. They're on your side. This is bad when it happens to you. It means you're bummed out.

You're still conscious, but you're too wigged out to play your instrument, make skill or attribute checks, or run away effectively. Your focus disappears. If you're on stage, you might want to get off so you're not the target of any more bad vibes. In an adventure, you're the equivalent of helpless. A quick infusion of good vibes can get you back into things.

Totally Losing It

At –10 cool points, you burn out, quit the band, and become an accountant. Make a new character.

Putting On a Show

Once the show is underway, you need to make decisions about how you're going to move and affect people in the audience. But you're stuck on stage. How are you going to get to that girl in the back row filing her nails? Read on.

Focus

When you're on stage, you're more or less stationary. Meanwhile your audience is scattered all over the room. That's why you have a moveable focus. Your focus represents where you're directing your attention and energy. Your vibes emanate from your focus which can move around the room under your control.

At the beginning of a set, your focus starts either where you are or from a speaker.

In one round you can use all your iterative perform attempts, move your focus 30 feet and perform, or move it 60 feet.

Your focus has two major differences from D&D combat. First, you do not get a 5-foot step. If you move your focus at all, it counts as a move-equivalent action. Second, facing matters. It matters because you're sending out vibes over a certain area.

Range and Area of Effect

Your range is an area of effect that defines who you can affect with your vibes. Different instruments affect people at different ranges, and in some cases, allow you to change the shape of your area of effect.

The standard area of effect is a cone. The cone's length is determined by your range stat, according to class and Constitution modifier. Remember that a cone's width equals its length at a given point. So, for example, 20 feet away from your focus, the cone is 20 feet wide.

Your area of effect only defines the area in which targets are available for you to affect. You may not make perform attempts against all targets within your area, unless a special ability specifically allows it.

You can change the placement of your range as a move-equivalent action, or you can change it during a move-equivalent action.

Flanking

Flanking occurs when two band members are directly opposite each other with a target between, and the target falls within both performers' areas of effect. When you flank an opponent, both performers involved in the flank get a +2 bonus to perform attempts. Both characters involved in the flank must be strictly positioned to be on the same line or diagonal to receive the flanking bonus.

New Spot Checks

The Spot check you make at the beginning of a set might not have revealed all the available targets in a room. Some targets might remain unspotted. If you're still getting hit with bad vibes and you don't know why, you can make a follow-up Spot check as a standard action. Roll a Spot check again to try to get a higher result.

Another band member who got a higher Spot result can also clue you in to a target's existence with a successful DC 10 Innuendo check.

Cover

If a target is behind a post or wearing earplugs or out in the lobby, the GM might rule that he or she has cover. This works like it does in regular D&D.

Battle of the Bands

A Battle of the Bands performance works a little differently than a standard performance. In a BoB performance, another band is also playing at the same time. (Possibly your hated rivals!) You also have a very obvious target: the contest judge (or judges).

In addition to winning over the judge, this type of performance adds direct competition. While you're attempting to win over the judge, the other band is doing the same thing. The judge essentially has dual cool point tracks. The first band to win over a judge wins that judge's approval, and the prize for the contest.

In addition to aiming your focus at the judges, you can send vibes at the other band, demoralizing them with your awesome sound. They might very well do the same thing to you. If the other band is villainous, they might even attempt to sabotage your show somehow.

OTHER D20 COMBAT STUFF

These things you don't need to worry about.

SURPRISE
ATTACKS OF OPPORTUNITY
DYING
ENCUMBRANCE
CHARGE
FACE/REACH
CONCEALMENT
DIFFERENT SIZED PARTICIPANTS
SUBDUAL DAMAGE
STRIKING OBJECTS
BULL RUSH
DISARM
MOUNTED COMBAT
OVERRUN
TRIP

If neither band won over the judge before the end of the set, the GM tallies up whose vibes affected the judge more. That band is the winner. The other band is the LOSERS.

ADVENTURES

What's a talented, scrappy rock band going to do between gigs? Right. Have adventures and solve mysteries.

Pretty much everywhere you go as a band, you'll find somebody has a problem. Sometimes that person will be you. Maybe your van broke down 60 miles from nowhere, so you sleep for the night in the spooky haunted mansion at the end of Dead Crow Lane. Other times, it will be a relative, or some nice person you just met. When you encounter situations like this, you've got to help by investigating.

Much of investigation will be standard adventure game fare. Talking to people, looking around for secret doors or hidden clues, and finding the various MacGuffins that make adventures adventurous.

Invariably though, you'll be discovered snooping around, and villainous goons will come after you. You'd like to make them lose their cool so they stop chasing you, but you don't have your instruments with you off stage. There's really only one good option. Run away.

RUNNING

When you decide to run, you enter a strange twilight dimension, entirely out of phase with real world topography. All bets are off regarding maps or floor plans. In fact, you might pass the same objects in the background several times. You have no destination. You're just running for dear life.

Each runner makes a Scram check. The DC for the Scram check is a Fort save opposed by the chaser. After everyone rolls, find the person with the lowest roll. Each runner who succeeded at the Scram check gives the lowest roller a +2 aid another bonus. If the lowest roller beats the DC, the group gets ahead of the chaser and deals 1d4 vibes to the chaser because of the frustration involved in chasing them around. This is called a "beat." If the lowest roller fails, the chaser gains a beat on the group. Everyone in the group takes 1d4 points of bad vibes in terror of being caught. These vibes are not one of the standard five bad vibes sources. Normal DR does not apply.

This means when running, you're only as fast as your slowest person. However, you'll generally run faster in a group, so don't be in a hurry to ditch the slow runner.
If one or more band members loses all his or her cool from being chased, the character faints dead away. The chaser automatically gains a beat on the group since they have to pick up the fainted member and keep running.

THRESHOLDS

Each chaser has certain thresholds. Each time you get a beat on the chaser, you come one step closer to passing a threshold. When you collect enough beats, you can attempt to try to ditch him or her. The GM will let you know when you've reached each threshold.
The thresholds are:

Hide: This is the first chance you have to escape. This means you have enough of a lead on your chaser to make a Hide check without being seen. Your Hide check is opposed by your chaser's Spot check, once he or she catches up. Note, however, that your chaser might take 20 on his or her Spot check, so if you hide, hide well.

Hijinx: At this threshold, you have enough time and presence of mind to turn the tables on your chasers with some wacky hijinx. If you succeed, you might make your chasers lose their cool, allowing you to escape. See Hijinx below.

Lost 'Em: At this point, you've gained enough ground on your chasers that you get away and can return to normal topography.

HIJINX

Hijinx occur when you have enough of a lead on your chasers that you can spend a few precious seconds preparing a ruse. Hijinx give you an opportunity to wear down a chaser's cool points faster than running alone. If the chasers haven't lost their cool at the end of a hijinx opportunity, you continue running. If they lose their cool though, you're home free. The chase is over. Those chasers might come back later, but they're gone for now. You can't take 10 or take 20 on any hijinx rolls unless specified.

When the hijinx threshold is reached, you have a choice of one of the following options:

PROP COMEDY

Suggest to the GM three props or sets of paraphernalia that might reasonably appear in your general vicinity. The GM selects his or her favorite of the three. Then, explain how you would turn the prop against a chaser for comedic and embarrassing effect. The GM assigns a DC 15 physical attribute check relevant to the attempt

(Strength, Dexterity, or Constitution). The highest success is used to deal 1d4 vibes points to the chaser for each point starting at 15. If no one succeeds, the hijinx attempt fails embarrassingly, and you have to keep running.

For instance, on a cruise ship, you might suggest a swimming pool, a shuffleboard deck, and skeet shooting equipment. After careful consideration, the GM chooses the shuffleboard deck. You tell the GM that you use the sticks to fire off a bunch of pucks at the chasers' feet, causing them to slip and fall comically, bonking their heads together on the "10." The GM says this sounds like Dexterity, so everyone rolls. Belle rolls highest with a 19, so her player gets to deal 5d4 vibes to each chaser.

Hallway Full of Doors

This is any set piece where a character could get lost or drop out of sight in a collection of similar objects. It doesn't have to be a hallway full of doors, this hijinx option is just named for its most famous example. A HFoD can be any area where several hiding options exist such as a room full of big urns, stacks of tires, or a haystack.

The GM rolls 1d4+1 to determine how long the HfoD hijinx last. Every character—PC or NPC—involved in the HFoD rolls 1d8 each round. The result on the die determines which "door" the character appears in. If a chaser and you appear in the same door, you take as many bad vibes as the result on the die. If no band member appears in the same door as a chaser, the chasers take the sum of the numbers of all of the band members' doors in cool points.

To avoid bad vibes, a PC may attempt to make an opposed Intelligence check. If the PC succeeds, he or she may turn the die up or down one point to weasel out. If there's also a chaser on the new face, bad vibes still apply. If the PC fails the opposed check, he or she takes double points.

So for instance, Francois and Buford are in a HfoD being chased by two of the false Caliph's goons. Francois and Buford's players each roll 1d8 and the GM roll 1d8 for each chaser. Francois gets a 4, Buford gets a 7, and the chasers get a 2 and a 4. This means that Francois takes 4 points of bad vibes. Francois could try an opposed Intelligence check to weasel out. If he succeeds, he could move his die to either "5" or "3." If he moves it up to 5, he's safe and the goons take 12 (7+5) points of vibes. If he fails, he takes 8 points of bad vibes! *Que Fromage!*

Clever Disguise

This is where you pull costumes from some nether region and dress up like manicurists or itinerant electricians or a barbershop quartet. The more inexplicable your disguise, the better. Then you proceed to act out a short skit which includes the chasers, who are so taken aback by the sudden and inappropriate appearance of someone in your position that they lose cool points from the mind-boggling incongruity of it all.

When you try this hijinx option, each band member involved makes a Disguise or Bluff check. The DC for both checks is (10 + chaser's Int mod + chaser's level). Anyone who succeeds at the Disguise check deals 1d6 points of vibes to each chaser. Anyone who succeeds at a Bluff check prolongs the hijinx for one more round. If no one succeeds at a Bluff check, the chasers get wise, and you have to run again.

Your GM might grant a +2 situational bonus for extra comedy such as a disguise that is ironically related to chasers (underwear inspectors inspecting a scarecrow monster for instance) or nutty cross-dressing.

Complex Villain Trap

A complex villain trap is a special form of hijinx that consists of some Rube Goldberg-esque collection of barrels, planks, carpets, cages, pits, pulleys, ropes, and other random materials which, when used in concert, ignominiously trap the chasers. The complex villain trap not only allows you to escape, it puts the chasers down for the rest of the adventure. After being caught in a complex villain trap, chasers are ready to be handed over to the appropriate authorities.

However, this form of hijinx has some caveats attached. First, it will only succeed if the chasers have fewer than 10 cool points. Since you don't really know when that is, be sure you've run them around a fair bit before you try it. And then hope. If they have more than 10 cool points, the trap captures them for one round, but then they break free and chase you some more. All beats are lost, and a new chase begins. Second, it requires more time to prepare than a standard hijinx attempt, so you can't just whip it out in the middle of a chase. You have to prepare it before the chase begins. Third, there's a chance your "bait" characters, the ones who ran around to lead the chasers into the trap, might fall into the trap. Each running PC must succeed at a DC 10 Jump check to clear the trigger so the bad guy can run into it.

Putting together a complex villain trap requires at least three band members to make three different skill checks each, and at least one band member to lead the chasers into the trap. Each check is progressively more difficult, DC 10, 15, and 20. The three skill checks are Use Rope, Disable Device, and Sleight of Hand. Each character involved may choose which skill will receive which DC. For instance, Belle might make Sleight of Hand her DC 10 check, Use Rope DC 15, and Disable Device DC 20, but DJ Smedley might apply the DCs to skills in a different order. You can use aid another on skill checks, but each PC must make his or her own rolls. You can take 10 on these checks, but not take 20.

What to Do When You're Not Running

The rest of the time you'll be talking to people, collecting clues and evidence, or just hanging out at the malt shoppe.

Downtown Night Club
1 square = 5 feet
WEST
KEY
1) Main Entrance
2) Entrance Foyer
3) Bar Room
4) Bar
5) Lounge
6) Dance Floor
7) Stage
8) Backstage
9) Ladies' Room
10) Mens' Room
11) Exit Foyer
12) Coat Room
13) Admission / Coat Check
14) Dining Room
15) Host's Station
16) Kitchen
17) Walk-in Cooler
18) Walk-in Freezer
19) Receiving Dock
20) Office
21) Dressing Rooms
22) Private Restroom
23) VIP Lounge
24) Emergency Exits
25) Dining Room Entrance
26) Parking Lot

TRACK 7: FOR THOSE ABOUT TO ROCK . . .

As a GM, remember that even with a different complexity in mechanics, *Hijinx* is a simple, simple game at heart. Even moreso than D&D, *Hijinx* is not a morality play or a serious whodunit. The players might be able to recite your plans to you 10 minutes after the session starts. This is fine. You don't want to force players to do anything, but it's okay to strictly limit their options. Surprise is important, but a great deal of the fun is the execution.

In order to execute the game well, you must provide your players with adventures and opponents. You also must provide them with experience for a job well done. This chapter contains advice on how to design *Hijinx* performances and adventures. It also provides a short conversion of the CR system for use with *Hijinx*, and tips on handing out experience at the end of a session. Track 8 includes some ready-made opponents so you can see how it's done.

STARTING OUT

Subtlety is no friend of yours. A session of *Hijinx* must be in primary colors with plots lean like a guitar neck. When you start, assume the PCs have already met, formed, rehearsed, and are ready for their first gig. Introduce them to their manager immediately.

THE MANAGER

The manager is your shameless *deus ex machina* NPC who will help you start nearly any game session. He or she sets up the scenario, drops the information you need to get the players up to speed, and disappears to take a meeting. Band managers are historically shady. By all means continue the tradition.

KEEP IT MOVING

Try to make each session a different adventure. This means you'll complete everything in a normal four-or-five-hour session, which means everything is going to have to happen fast. That's fine. This is cartoons, not high drama. You don't have to explain everything, or even necessarily anything, and it doesn't even really have to make sense at the end.

Introduce all the relevant NPCs very quickly and then shuffle them back out of the way. Don't spend a lot of time coaxing the PCs into things. If you want them in New York City to play in Radio City Music Hall, start the session with their manager telling them they're booked for Radio City Music Hall, and they've just shown up at the hall to check things out before the show.

SETTING UP PERFORMANCES

Think of the standard performance as a major D&D battle. Think of the audience as several groups of opponents. A character's focus will be moving much more freely than a D&D character will, because there aren't dungeon walls to slow them down.

Instead, you're going to slow them down by making them run around a lot. Think of standard audience members as the goblin horde of your dungeon. Individually, they're not much of a challenge, but they'll whittle away at the PCs over time. Make them a little more challenging than speed bumps, but not much.

When you're planting audience members in a crowd, arrange them by Spot difficulty ahead of time. Then place them in ascending order, far enough away from each other that PCs are going to have to hustle to get to them. (In smaller rooms the horn player is going to sit in the middle of the room and not move much. That's fine, because that's what they're good at.)

Make every performance different. Change things to keep players on their toes. Factors you can change include:

Set Length: Ask the players to prepare a six-song set once, and give them a surprise visit from a tough music critic. You also can cut them off after two or three songs with a power outage, leading into the adventure early.

Room Size: Different-sized, or oddly shaped rooms can mix things up. Audience members under the balcony are much harder to spot, and people sitting behind posts have cover.

Multi-Purpose Venue: Have their manager book them into crappy gigs playing at a bowling alley or a car lot, where people are really there to do something besides listen to them.

Tough Room: A record company scout may be easy to spot, but hard to win over, forcing the band to choose between getting a bunch of small fish or one big fish.

Equipment Failure: If stage divers screw up a bank of speakers, the PCs are going to have to move a lot more than they'd hoped.

ENVIRONMENTAL DISTRACTIONS

On top of a noncommittal audience, you've got other tools to set up an interesting performance. Dropping environmental distractions or limitations on the players can make them rethink their performance. Samples include:

The Outdoor Arena: All the motion of distractions create a -4 penalty to Spot checks for finding targets.

The Hall With Crappy Sound: Acoustics are terrible, halving their range.

Buggy Electronics: Every other round, amps and speakers stop working.

Lip Sync: You could require the PCs to lip synch their songs because the performance actually involves shooting a video, or maybe the lead singer lost her voice. This can incur a -4 "unfamiliar weapon" penalty.

Venue Sizes

Here are some good sizes to choose from when drawing up a venue for a *Hijinx* performance. You can sprinkle room features such as balconies, posts, trees, really tall people, lawn seating, etc. to make things interesting within a volume, and of course, room shapes can vary wildly. After that, PCs can set up speakers to their best advantage. But in any case, a big rectangle is a great place to start.

Small Club: 80 ft. by 50 ft. (4,000 sq ft.)
Large Club: 60 ft. by 120 ft. (7,200 sq ft.)
Small Theater: 200 ft. by 150 ft. (30,000 sq ft.)
Large Theater: 400 ft. by 300 ft (120,000 sq ft.)
Amphitheater: 400 ft. by 1,000 ft. (400,000 sq ft.)
Festival Stage: 500 ft. by 2000 ft. (1,000,000 sq ft.)

Spreading the Love

Whoever takes lead is going to get really pounded in the first song. To keep the person from getting totally wiped out in the first round, all unspotted opponents do only 1d6 bad vibes until spotted. Once their true nature opens up, they can do their standard bad vibe. Also, once an audience member has been the target of someone's perform attempt, make that person aim their bad vibes to the band member who just performed to them. Of course, if the audience member has a special reason to be aiming at the lead, carry on.

Adventures

Although the PCs' actions revolve around excuses to play their instruments, they will invariably encounter some crooked person who wants to do something bad. The PCs must thus set it right. Unlike other games, you don't need a more complex hook than that. Wrongdoing is enough reason to want to set things right, and heavy-handed motivation is right at home. To ensure that this happens, always be crystal clear about who the good guys and bad guys are. Occasional duplicity is allowed, but do this sparingly.

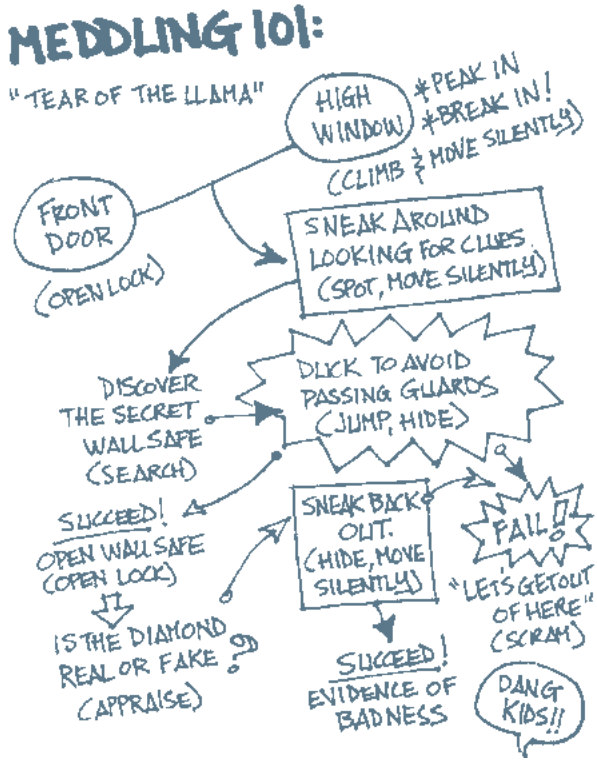
In any adventure, a villain is clearly doing something wrong to someone who is completely innocent. The adventure needs to consist of discovering who the villain is, getting evidence of the villain's badness, and then using that evidence to bring the villain down, foil his or her scheme, or make reparations for the good guy who the PCs are there to help. That's pretty much the outline of every adventure you're going to run.

Some components of an adventure include:

Skills

Skills are meant to be a bigger part of *Hijinx* than in some other d20 games. In every adventure, drop in lots of places to challenge the PCs' skill sets. Make sure there's plenty of jumping, climbing, spotting, and listening, but also create opportunities to use more obscure skills like Read Lips or Appraise. A great way to do this is to make the skills necessary to finding out the identity of the person at the center of everything. After the PCs are introduced to someone who needs help, point them in the direction of where they need to go snooping around.

Ideally, you'll have a map prepared of the villain's lair, just like you would for a normal dungeon. But otherwise, a flowchart of what the PCs need to get past will work just fine. For instance, your flowchart might look like this:


MEDDLING 101:
"TEAR OF THE LLAMA"
HIGH WINDOW
*PEAK IN
*BREAK IN!
(CLIMB & MOVE SILENTLY)
FRONT DOOR
(OPEN LOCK)
SNEAK AROUND LOOKING FOR CLUES (SPOT, MOVE SILENTLY)
DISCOVER THE SECRET WALL SAFE (SEARCH)
DUCK TO AVOID PASSING GUARDS (JUMP, HIDE)
SUCCEED! OPEN WALL SAFE (OPEN LOCK)
SNEAK BACK OUT. (HIDE, MOVE SILENTLY)
FAIL!
"LET'S GET OUT OF HERE" (SCRAM)
IS THE DIAMOND REAL OR FAKE? (APPRAISE)
SUCCEED! EVIDENCE OF BADNESS
DANG KIDS!!

Of course, you'll narrate the action better than this, because this is pretty boring. But you get the idea.

The Chase

At some point in an adventure, you're going to want to start a chase. Chases happen when a villain or a villain's goons discover the PCs snooping around in the villain's lair.

There are three good ways to initiate a chase. First, you can decide a couple of points where, if PCs are indiscreet or fail skill checks, goons catch sight of them and a chase begins. Second, keep a tally of how often PCs fail at various physical skill checks while snooping around the villain's lair. When the failures reach a certain level, say 5 or 6, have the goons show up. Third, just toss one in when

things get boring or the PCs seem stumped. It'll help keep things exciting.

Note that some villains involve themselves in chases, and some leave the chasing up to the goons, depending on the type of villain. If you plan on reusing a villain, have him or her just send goons out to chase the PCs around. If you want a villain to be handed over to the authorities, by all means, let the villain do the chasing.

PERFORMANCE

Don't forget to come up with some flimsy excuse for the PCs to play their instruments.

THINGS TO DO

In the source material, fantastic things happen with alarming frequency. If they can be explained by "scientific" reasoning, or attributed to human agents, they're fine, even if it's as unlikely as weather changing rays or robot armies. However, if the premise appears supernatural, there must be an unambiguously mundane solution at the end of things.

Thanks to the complete lack of network censorship over your game though, you can make the world as weird as you want. Maybe there really are *gulp* g-g-ghosts! Or maybe it's one of the four NPCs you introduced in the first 10 minutes of the game in a costume. You make the call

AMERICA'S TOP-20 PLAYER HOOKS

1. Crooked corporate "suits" try to muscle Farmer McGurk off his land to put up a shopping mall.
2. When the van spews smoke and cell phone batteries run down, the PCs must stop and spend the night in a haunted house observatory/casino/theater/riverboat/daycare center.
3. Persephone Fair is coming to town, and they always want local bands to perform on the smaller stages. Only one local band gets the spot though, and only if the band is all womyn. Cross-dressing wackiness ensues... and that's before the wicked witch shows up to stop the concert!
4. Uncle Sven just inherited a run-down amusement park, and needs help whipping it into shape. But some evil clown doesn't want it whipped into shape.
5. Someone steals the crown jewels from the tiny European kingdom of Castlelandia just as the PCs are playing at the Castlelandia Music Festival.
6. All the zoo animals have gone missing!
7. A mysterious stranger offers the PCs $1,000 each to deliver a lumpy package to a certain address in the next town where they're scheduled to play. When they get there, no one lives at the address, but weird sounds are coming from inside. Almost like... music.
8. Fibson guitars is having a contest to see who can make the best music video in three wild locations featuring Fibson guitars. Grand prize is way better guitars than what the band has now.
9. The young caliph of some Middle Eastern country is a huge fan and has asked the band to play for a private audience. But by the time the PCs arrive, a false caliph is in the middle of executing a subtle coup. And he doesn't like the PCs' music at all.
10. Vampires are terrorizing a small mining town where the band is. What's up with that?
11. A techno pirate has figured out a way to break into people's computers with the Slapster file trading service. Strangely, the pirate only hacks computers that have the PCs' mp3s.
12. The band receives an invitation to play at a party thrown by a reclusive millionaire. But on the way to the gig, all sorts of obstacles keep cropping up, and a black van follows them everywhere.
13. A super-clumsy, uber-dork music journalist wants to follow the band around to do a "day-in-the-life" piece. On the worst day of their lives.
14. "Rock The Stars" is a NASA publicity stunt. A bunch of different bands (including the rival band) are invited to try to pass psychological, fitness, and musicality tests to be the first band to play in orbit. But somebody wants to put a stop to the whole shebang.
15. The band is called to be a part of a big benefit recording for no-kill animal shelters. A bunch of rising bands will be there for the recording. When the power suddenly goes out, though, people start to disappear.
16. Flying saucers. Black helicopters. Men in black suits. Toss something together.
17. The PCs are on a reality TV show scavenger hunt, pitted against their arch-nemesis rival band.
18. A mad scientist's hypno ray is turning thousands of teenagers into mindless drones who only want to listen to polka music.
19. The PCs arrive late to a gig where they're scheduled to be the main attraction. But when they arrive, they see themselves already on stage!
20. The band's video is in the running to air in the hot spot of *Yodel Request Live*. If they can rustle up 500 fans to show up at the station and yodel for their video before 4 o'clock, they're in for some big time exposure. Now where do you find 500 people on a weekday morning?

Stan Shaw

for your game, but try to keep the players guessing. It's more fun.

Adventures can be related to the venues that the band plays in, or they can be completely extraneous to performances. It's usually best to work in at least one place for the PCs to play a gig (the thinnest of premises will do) but it's not a must. The sidebar on page 38 contains 20 sample adventures the band might get mixed up in.

THE OPPOSITION

In a performance, each target is a person in the audience who either actively dislikes the PCs' music, or hasn't decided yet. A lot of targets will just be nameless people in the audience. Some have names, and/or agendas. A good rule of thumb is if you give somebody a name, give him or her a personality.

Personality doesn't have to be complex. For each named target just answer two questions: Why is this person here? What does this person like or hate?

Pick one or two audience members or aspects of the venue that you'll clue the players into if they do the appropriate snooping around first.

Also, remember that like PCs, performance targets have a move of 30 feet. They move to escape flanks or uncomfortable situations.

TABLE 7-1: THE GENERIC

Level	Base Bad Vibe Bonus	Defense	Good Save	Med Save	Bad Save
1	+1	+1	+2	+1	+0
2	+2	+2	+3	+1	+0
3	+3	+2	+3	+2	+1
4	+4	+2	+4	+2	+1
5	+5	+3	+4	+3	+1
6	+6	+3	+5	+3	+2
7	+7	+3	+5	+3	+2
8	+8	+4	+6	+4	+2
9	+9	+4	+6	+4	+3
10	+10	+4	+7	+5	+3

GENERIC LEVELS

Here's the generic level chart for an audience member, random goon, or anybody else in the world who doesn't play an instrument. Note that these schmoes never get iterative anythings.

Cool Dice: d8

CLASS SKILLS

The generic's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Balance (Dex), Bluff (Cha), Climb (Str), Craft (Int), Diplomacy (Cha), Disable Device (Int), Drive (Dex), Innuendo (Wis), Intimidate (Cha), Jump (Str), Knowledge (Int), Listen (Wis), Move Silently, (Dex), Spot (Wis).

Skill Points at 1st level: (4 + Int modifier) × 4.
Skill Points at each additional level: 4 + Int modifier.

Range: 20 ft + 5 feet per point of Constitution modifier.
Saves: Pick good, medium, and bad saves according to whim.

THE STAT BLOCK

An opponent's stat block looks like this. If this doesn't make sense I can only assume you haven't been paying attention:

Name: Level #; Init +#; CD #; cp #; Defense #; Vibe +# [angry/bored/distracted/jealous/snooty/instrument], #d#+#; Range # ft. SQ XXX; Saves Fort +#, Ref +#, Will +#; *Thresholds:* Hide #, Hij #, Lost #; Str #, Dex #, Con #, Int #, Wis #, Cha #. CR #.

Skills/Feats:

Special Qualities:

TOUGH CROWD: 25 NASTY AUDIENCE MEMBERS

Ex-girl/boyfriend: angry
Hip hop thugz: angry
Shock jock: angry
Jilted record label exec: angry
Hated your last album: angry
Sitting behind the post: bored
There because the SO wanted to come: bored
Sound tech: bored
Chauffeur mom: bored
Too-hip-for-the-room rock critic: bored, snooty
Just wandering by: distracted
Talking on the cell phone: distracted
Make-out couple: distracted
Security guard: distracted
People who don't speak English very well: distracted
Aging has-been rock star: jealous
Young wannabe rock star: jealous
Rival band members in the audience: angry, jealous
Music journalist: jealous
Fashionista: jealous
Picketing anti-rock music group: angry, snooty
Opera fans who somehow came to the wrong place: snooty
Original fans who think you sold out: snooty
Yuppie: snooty
Congressional aide doing research: snooty

THE THREE OPPONENT TYPES

Three kinds of opponents await PCs: audience members, goons, and villains. Check 'em out:

AUDIENCE MEMBERS

When you think up an audience member, decide why that person is at a concert where they've got something against the band. This will help define what sort of bad vibes that opponent sends out. Here are 25 sample audience members and the types of bad vibes they would send out.

GOONS

Anybody with half a master plan has a bunker full of barrel-chested guys in turtleneck sweaters to do their bidding. Goons are the usual suspects when PCs need to encounter someone bad-guy related, but you don't want it to be the bad guy. Some sample goons are given in the next track.

VILLAINS

These are the main opposition, and the most colorful NPCs in the game. They come up with unlikely plans to do any number of things from make the PCs have a bad day to ruling the world so that PCs have something to do. Villains often have a hook or motif such as a monocle or a pet monkey or some cinematic deformity. Rival bands are a special form of villain who don't technically do anything wrong, but are just mean and nasty to the PCs. Sample villains are presented in Track 8.

VILLAINOUS SPECIAL QUALITIES

Some villains or goons have special qualities in addition to their general villainousness. Special qualities generally require a saving throw for characters to resist, and usually come from an item the villain has. Lots of low-level spells in the *Player's Handbook* make good special abilities; steal liberally from the spell list for options and attendant rules. Sample special qualities include:

Hypnosis: The villain has a swirly disk or hypno rave multimedia. Anyone who looks at it must succeed at a Will save (DC 10 + Int mod. + V Cool Dice) or be hypnotized (see the charm person spell in the *PH* for specifics).

Scary: This villain is just way scary. Anytime PCs look at the villain, they must make a successful (DC 10 + Cha mod. + V Cool Dice) Will save or be frightened.

Knockout Gas: Thick, green gas causes the PCs to cough a lot and then fall unconscious unless they make a Fortitude save (DC 18).

Trap Door: Trap doors are subtle things that happen to be wherever the PCs are standing in one specific room. They must make a Reflex save (DC 15). Failure means they fall in.

Nabbing: One of the few direct, physical interactions in the game, big, tough villains (or their goons) sometimes just grab PCs as a prelude to knocking them out and putting them in a cell. When attempting to nab someone, the nabber must make an opposed Strength check with an adjacent target. If successful, the target is nabbed. Nabbed characters cannot move, attack, or use special abilities, and lose all Wisdom bonus to Defense. PCs must make a Reflex save (DC = opponent's Str score) to escape. PCs with the Escape Artist skill may substitute an Escape Artist check instead.

STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

Opponents who are interesting enough to have names sometimes have preferences and weak spots that make them more or less susceptible to certain songs or instruments. This mostly applies to people in the music industry, whom the band will be trying to impress. Record execs and radio personalities, for instance, look for certain types of songs based on personal preference or what they think will sell. In these cases, think of this as a double/half damage kind of scenario. If an opponent wants to hear pop songs, but not power songs, then he or she takes double vibes from a pop song, and half vibes from power.

Some opponents might also be more or less resistant to certain types of instruments. Classical music lovers might

take half damage from electronic instruments, or this guy who used to tour with *Stomp!* might take extra vibes from percussion instruments.

You don't have to keep these likes and dislikes paired, but it helps. Maybe there's somebody who really, really hates one type of music more than any other.

Rewards

This section is all about how to reward players for adventures with money and experience.

Money

If you've looked closely at the prices on the gear charts, you've probably realized that we're not promoting a real-world economy here. Below is the recommended amount of money you pay each PC per performance.

For the first two levels, PCs will make very little money. If anyone had the presence of mind to take the Craft skill, they'll make a lot more money selling merchandise than performing at low levels. In addition to these performance fees, you might also want to occasionally dispense reward money for foiling crooks or winning contests at higher levels. The amounts listed here allow the PCs to buy most of, but not everything, they'll want at around the levels where equipment of a certain caliber becomes appropriate. Note that dream instruments are off the scale. PCs need the occasional contest prize or gift from the record label to achieve these highest levels of stuff.

When they start talking about how much they need to get one more piece of gear and bemoan that performance fees won't cover it, that's when you dangle the reward money carrot. Clever you.

Experience

Experience in *Hijinx* maps directly to record sales. The more experience the band has, the more records they have, in essence, sold. If you think of each experience point equating to five record sales, then by the time four players have reached 50,000 experience points, they'll have sold a million records. This means that larger bands won't all have to reach 10th level to sell a million, and smaller bands might have to play a while at 10th level to sell their million.

That's all flavor text though. The real deal is like this: give out experience like you do in D&D. To calculate experience for a session, use the same charts you'd normally use in the *Dungeon Master's Guide*.

Calculating CRs

To use the charts in the *DMG*, you need to know CRs. Calculate an opponent's CR by following these highly technical steps:

1) Divide cool points by 4.5.
2) Add 2 or 3 to the result for each special quality the opponent has.
3) Divide that number by 3.
4) Round up or down to make the result a whole number. That's roughly your CR.
5) If the number seems off, sweeten to taste.

Table 7-2: Performance Pay

Level	Payment Per Performance
1	$10
2	$25
3	$50
4	$100
5	$250
6	$500
7	$1000
8	$1500
9	$2000
10	$3000

Jake Parker

TRACK 8: PRE-FAB VILLAINS AND GOONS

Here's some sample bad guys so you don't have to waste a lot of time coming up with this stuff yourself. In a lot of cases, NPCs have bad vibes and ranges just in case they wind up at a concert for some reason.

CRIMINAL TENDENCIES, RIVAL PUNK BAND

Criminal Tendencies is a band of four misanthropic thugs who give California power-punk a bad name. They break stuff and make fun of everyone who isn't them, especially the PCs. For some reason, a certain segment of society likes this kind of behavior and buys their albums and T-shirts.

JACK SPASM

Leader of Criminal Tendencies, Jack is the clever one. He likes to smash stuff on stage and wears big, heavy, black boots all the time. Even while sleeping. He has a love/hate relationship with his brother, Mike, who he bosses around the most.

Jack Spasm: Vocalist 1; Init +1; CD 1d12+2; cp 14; Defense 12 (+2 class, –1 Wis, +1 threads); Vibe +2 angry, 1d6+2 or +3 vocals 1d6+2; Range 35 ft.; SQ Backup bump; Saves Fort +3, Ref +1, Will +1; Str 10, Dex 12, Con 13, Int 15, Wis 8, Cha 14. CR 1.

Skills/Feats: Bluff +6, Drive +5, Gather Information +6, Innuendo +3, Spot +3, Scram +5; Good Dancer, Related (Mike Spasm).

Gear: Lucky shirt.

NIELS VANDERWAAHL

Niels would prefer that Criminal Tendencies be more Sex Pistols than Green Day. He affects a British accent and sticks his tongue out a lot. He secretly plots against Jack to take over the band.

Niels VanDerWaahl: Guitarist 1; Init +0; CD 1d10+1; cp 11; Defense 13 (+1 class, +1 Wis, +1 threads); Vibe +2 jealous, 1d6+2 or +3 guitar, 1d10+2; Range 40 ft.; SQ Guitar solo; Saves Fort +3, Ref +2, Will +2; Str 8, Dex 10, Con 14, Int 12, Wis 13, Cha 15. CR 1.

Skills/Feats: Innuendo +5, Sleight of Hand +4, Scram +6; Private Lessons, Power Chord.

Gear: Lucky shirt, used guitar.

LARS

Lars is far too punk to have a last name. He almost never talks, and when he does, he mumbles.

Lars: Bassist 1; Init +1; CD 1d8-1; cp 7; Defense 15 (+2 class, +2 Wis, +1 threads); Vibe +1 distracted, 1d6+1 or +1 bass, 1d8+1; Range 25 ft.; SQ Good vibes; Saves Fort +5, Ref +3, Will +4; Str 10, Dex 12, Con 14, Int 8, Wis 15, Cha 13. CR 1.

Skills/Feats: Move Silently +3, Open Lock +3, Scram +6; Faster Focus, Hook-Up Action (breaking and entering).

Gear: Lucky shirt, used bass.

MIKE SPASM

Mike is Jack's enormous, sullen brother. He's got great hair. He does what Jack tells him to, but he picks on Jack a lot. He won't let anyone else pick on him though.

Mike Spasm: Drummer 1; Init –1; CD 1d6; cp 6; Defense 13 (+1 class, +1 Wis, +1 threads); Vibe +1 angry, 1d6+1 or +0 drums, 1d8+1 and +0 cymbals 1d6; Range 50 ft.; SQ Extra feats; Saves Fort +3, Ref +0, Will +2; Str 15, Dex 8, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 13, Cha 12. CR 1.

Skills/Feats: Craft +4, Climb +6, Intimidate +6, Scram +6; Ambidexterity, Extra Instrument, Related (Jack Spasm), The Tough One.

Gear: Lucky shirt, used drum set, used cymbals.

CALLING THE MOON, RIVAL PROGRESSIVE BAND

You could call it chick rock, but you'd probably better not. Heather, Janice, and K.L. opine about womyn's issues and croon softly, but deep down they're jilted sorority girls with a mile-wide wicked streak.

HEATHER LANGSTROM–MILLSFORD

Heather doesn't just think she's better than you. She knows it. Since everyone is perpetually beneath her, she lives her life suffering fools ungraciously. The only joy she has is coming up with creative ways to tell other people how terrible they are.

Heather Langstrom-Millsford: Vocalist 4; Init +0; CD 4d12+4; cp 35; Defense 19 (+3 class, +2 Wis, +4 threads) ; Vibe +3 bored, 1d6+3 or +6 vocals 1d8+3; Range 35 ft.; SQ A capella knockout, backup bump, blow off, DR 1 against bored vibes; Saves Fort +3, Ref +1, Will +6; Str 9, Dex 10, Con 12, Int 16, Wis 14, Cha 16. CR 4.

Skills/Feats: Disable Device +4, Knowledge +10, Gather Information +10, Innuendo +9, Pep Talk +9, Read Lips +10, Spot +9, Use Rope +9; Power Chord, Songwriter (political), The Brainy One.

Gear: Funky jewelry, cool outfit, +1 amp, normal speakers.

JANICE CHRYSANTHEMUM

Janice wears size 0 dresses and her hair always looks great. She certainly looks better than any female PC, which she makes sure they know through catty comments and disdainful glances.

Janice Chrysanthemum: Guitarist 3/Vocalist 1; Init +1; CD 3d10+6 plus 1d12+2; cp 35; Defense 21 (+3 class, +1 Wis, +7 threads); Vibe +4 snooty, 1d6+4 or +8 guitar, 1d10+4 or +8 vocals 1d6+4 ; Range Guit 40 ft., Voc 40 ft; SQ Backup bump, DR 1 against bored vibes, guitar solo, special face; Saves Fort +4, Ref +4, Will +5; Str 8, Dex 13, Con 15, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 18. CR 4.

Skills/Feats: Animal Empathy +5, Bluff +5, Innuendo +7, Spot +7; Good Dancer, Songwriter (radio-friendly), The Sexy One.

Gear: Awesome jewelry, glam outfit.

K. L. BONNIE

Embittered by men, women, insensitivity, government, pollution, war, and people who forget to use their turn signals, K.L. is venomously jealous of anyone having a good time when the world is such an awful place.

K. L. Bonnie: Guitarist 2/Vocalist 2; Init +1; CD 2d10 plus 2d12; cp 28; Defense 20 (+3 class, +3 Wis, +4 threads); Vibe +1 jealous, 1d6+1 or +5 guitar, 1d10+1 or +5 vocals, 1d6+1; Range Guit 30 ft., Voc 30 ft; SQ Backup bump, blow off, DR 1 against bored vibes, guitar solo; Saves Fort +1, Ref +3, Will +4; Str 13, Dex 12, Con 11, Int 15, Wis 16, Cha 13. CR 4.

Skills/Feats: Escape Artist +6, Innuendo +8, Intimidate +6, Spot +8, Listen +5, Drive +3; Mouth Harp, Songwriter (power), The Tough One.

Gear: +1 amp, cool outfit, funky jewelry, harmonica, normal speakers.

GOONS

Dress up your goons appropriate to the local scenery. Goons of many nations may look different, but they're basically the same the world over. Important note: Goons presented here are cooked so that PCs of similar level who top out in Scram checks succeed about 75% of the time. Feel free to mess with this delicate balance, but remember that you basically want the PCs to get away, as long as they sweat for it.

Incompetent Goon: Generic 1; Init +0; CD 1d8; cp 7; Defense 11 (class +1); Vibe +1 angry, 1d6; Range 20 ft.; Saves Fort +2, Ref +1, Will +2; *Thresholds:* Hide 2, Hij 3, Lost 5; Str 12, Dex 10, Con 10, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 10. CR 1/2.

Skills/Feats: Drive +4, Intimidate +4, Listen +4, Spot +4; Better Saving Throw (Will), Too Cool.

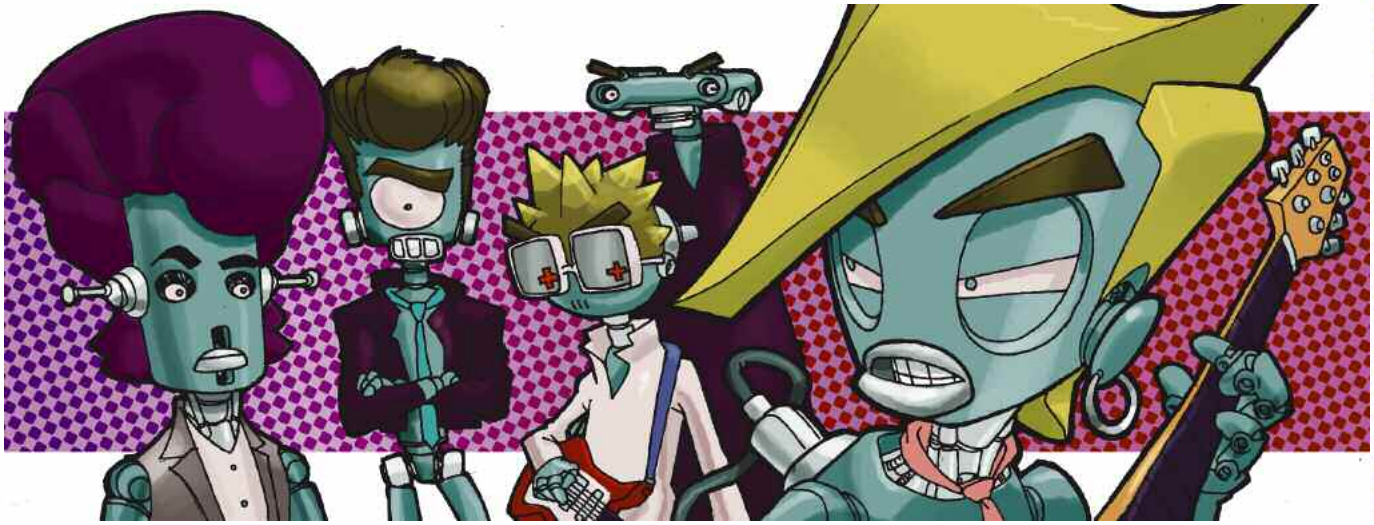
Tougher Goon: Generic 3; Init +0; CD 3d8+3; cp 19; Defense 13 (class +2, Wis +1); Vibe +4 angry, 1d6+1; Range 20 ft.; Saves Fort +3, Ref +2, Will +4; *Thresholds:* Hide 2, Hij 4, Lost 6; Str 14, Dex 10, Con 10, Int 12, Wis 13, Cha 10. CR 2.

Skills/Feats: Drive +6, Intimidate +9, Jump +8, Listen +7, Spot +7; Better Saving Throw (Will), Mad Skillz (Intimidate), Too Cool.

Professional Goon: Generic 6; Init +5; CD 6d8+6; cp 36; Defense 15 (class +3, Wis +2); Vibe +7 angry, 1d8+1; Range 20 ft.; SQ Nab; Saves Fort +5, Ref +4, Will +6; *Thresholds:* Hide 4, Hij 6, Lost 8; Str 16, Dex 12, Con 11, Int 13, Wis 14, Cha 13. CR 4.

Skills/Feats: Climb +12, Drive +10, Intimidate +13, Jump +12, Listen +11, Spot +11; Better Saving Throw (Will), Improved Initiative, Mad Skills (Intimidate), Too Cool.

Weapons-Grade Goon: Generic 9; Init +5; CD 9d8+18; cp 57; Defense 17 (class +4, Wis +3); Vibe +10 angry, 2d6+1; Range



Jake Parker

25 ft.; SQ Nab; Saves Fort +7, Ref +5, Will +8; *Thresholds:* Hide 5, Hij 8, Lost 9; Str 18, Dex 12, Con 12, Int 15, Wis 16, Cha 13. CR 5.

Skills/Feats: Climb +16, Drive +13, Intimidate +16, Jump +16, Listen +15, Spot +15; Better Saving Throw (Will), FEAT, Improved Initiative, Mad Skillz (Intimidate), Too Cool.

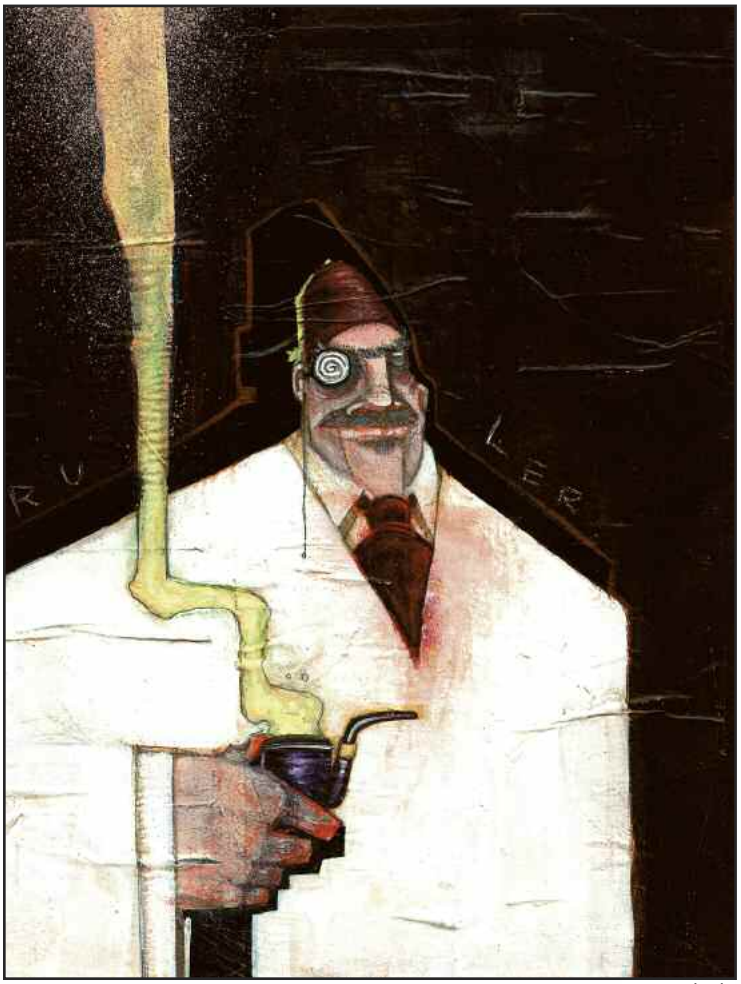
Robot Goon: Generic 4; Init +6; CD 4d8+16; cp 37; Defense 15 (class +2, Wis +3); Vibe +2 distracted, 1d12-2; Range 40 ft.; SQ Unmusical, target vision, illogic weakness, water weakness; Saves Fort +6, Ref +3, Will +7; *Thresholds:* Hide 3, Hij 5, Lost 7; Str 18, Dex 14, Con 18, Int 18, Wis 16, Cha 6. CR 4.

Skills/Feats: Balance +9, Climb +11, Drive +9, Intimidate +8, Jump +11, Knowledge +11, Listen +10, Spot +10; Improved Initiative, Mad Skillz (Intimidate), Too Cool.

Unmusical—Robots are hard to move with music. They have DR 10 against all performance attempts.

Target Vision—Robot goons can see perfectly well in the dark out to 60 feet, have a total visual range of 600 feet, and can see through smoke, camouflage, or any invisibility effects.

Illogic Weakness—If someone asks a robot a nonsense question or plays logic games with it, the robot shouts "Error! Error!" and shuts down for 1d6 rounds to reboot. During this time, the robot is helpless. The same illogic won't work twice.



Dave Crosland

Water Weakness—Dumping liquid on a robot causes it to spark and short out. Treat this as a 1d6 Dexterity drain each round the robot is doused.

VILLAINS

Use these villains whole cloth, or just swipe the stats and give them your own personalities and motives.

VISCOUNT JOHNSON

This American aristo-wannabe bought his title when a small European country needed some extra cash. He's involved in shady schemes on both sides of the Atlantic, but never directly. The viscount styles himself a svengali to up-and-coming musicians, but his contract is too intrusive for anyone in their right minds. However, he's just right to hire or create a rival band to sic on the PCs for their effrontery after they turn him down.

Viscount Johnson: Generic 7; Init +5; CD 7d8+21; cp 52; Defense 16 (class +3, Wis +3); Vibe +10 jealous, 1d8+3 or +10 snooty, 1d10+3; Range 25 ft.; Saves Fort +3, Ref +6, Will +8; *Thresholds:* Hide 4, Hij 5, Lost 6; Str 9, Dex 13, Con 12, Int 16, Wis 16, Cha 17. CR 4.

Skills/Feats: Bluff +15, Diplomacy +15, Intimidate +9, Knowledge +13, Listen +13; Better Saving Throw (Ref), Hook-Up Action (Smooth Talker), Good Dancer, Improved Initiative.

Gear: Various nouveau riche toys with no game effects.

THE FALSE CALIPH

Rahjneesh used to be the thick-necked vizier to a young caliph in a camel-intensive Middle Eastern nation. Recently, he has attempted to overthrow the caliph's right to rule through massive goon application. Somebody needs to stop the big jerk.

Rahjneesh, The False Caliph: Generic 3; Init +1; CD 3; cp 26; Defense 13 (class +2, threads +1); Vibe +3 angry, 1d8; Range 40 ft.; Saves Fort +7, Ref +2, Will +4; *Thresholds:* Hide 2, Hij 5, Lost 7; Str 18, Dex 12, Con 18, Int 14, Wis 10, Cha 10. CR 2.

Skills/Feats: Bluff +8, Diplomacy +6, Drive +5, Listen +6, Ride +5, Spot +6; Better Saving Throw (Will), Mad Skillz (Bluff), Too Cool.

Gear: BMW, camels, lucky shirt (imposing turban).

DR. ROBOTICUS

The twisted genius of Dr. Roboticus has devised a robot band. Playing with mechanical precision, these robot musicians are programmed to take over the world with '80s synth pop.

Dr. Roboticus: Keyboardist 9; Init -1; CD 7d6+35; cp 60; Defense 19 (+6 class, +1 Wis, +2 threads); Vibe +2 distracted, 2d6+2 or +9 bitchin' new keyboard, 1d8+2; Range bad vibes 30 ft., keyboard 45 ft.; SQ Background noise 2, feelin' groovy, good vibes, great vibes, hypnosis, keyboard solo, on the one, pick up slack; Saves Fort +8, Ref +5, Will +4; Thresholds: Hide 5, Hij 6, Lost 9; Str 10, Dex 9, Con 14, Int 21, Wis 12, Cha 14. CR 7.

Skills/Feats: Bluff +14, Disable Device +17, Drive +11, Forgery +3, H4XXor +17, Knowledge +17, Hide +11, Listen +13, Speak Language (all of 'em), Open Lock +11, Repair +17, Search +17, Spot +13, Use Rope +11; Fast Hands, Faster Focus, Longer Range, Power Chord, Rein It In.

Gear: +3 amp, bitchin' new keyboard, lucky shirt (starchy lab coat), funky jewelry (obtuse headgear), giant speakers.

Hypnosis—Dr. Roboticus has engineered subliminal '80s-style synthesizer music that will cause the eyes of anyone who listens to go all swirly. Anyone who hears it must succeed at a Will save (DC 18) or obey his every command (see the *charm person* spell in the *PH* for specifics).

Dave Crosland

Herr Showpenhower

Herr Showpenhower hates anything that isn't classical music. And he's got, like, a zillion dollars which he'll use to try to destroy rock music forever! He sits in his big Bavarian mansion with his evil cat, Roland, inventing schemes to discredit honest rock 'n' roll musicians.

If the PCs have a pet, Roland hates their pet too. Roland can use his spunky ability to cancel the effects of one PC spunky pet.

Herr Showpenhower: Generic 10; Init +1; CD 10d8+10; cp 58; Defense 19 (+4 class, +5 Wis); Vibe +11 angry, 2d8+1 or +11 snooty, 3d6+1; Range 30 ft.; Saves Fort +7, Ref +6, Will +12; *Thresholds:* Hide 1, Hij 3, Lost 4; Str 10, Dex 12, Con 15, Int 12, Wis 20, Cha 12. CR 5.

Skills/Feats: Animal Empathy +9, Knowledge +14, Listen +18, Move Silently +14, Spot +18; Better Saving Throw (Fort), Mad Skillz (Animal Empathy), Pet, Spunky Pet, Too Cool.

Gear: Priceless artifacts that break easily.

Swamp Ghost

The swamp ghost wants people to stay out of its swamp. The ghost will kidnap or vandalize to make the point, and has alligator minions to frighten away the rubes. The swamp ghost might be a guy in a costume, or it might be a real alligator-wrestling ghost. Or something else. Whatever's scariest, really.

Swamp Ghost: Generic 5; Init +0; CD 5d8; cp 33; Defense 17 (+3 class, +1 Wis, +3 threads); Vibe +8 angry, 1d10+3; Range 30 ft.; SQ Scary; Saves Fort +5, Ref +4, Will +4; Thresholds: Hide 4, Hij 6, Lost 8; Str 15, Dex 11, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 17. CR 4.

Skills/Feats: Intimidate +11, Listen +9, Move Silently +8, Spot +9; Better Saving Throw (Will), Too Cool, Too Cool. Gear: Spooky swamp clothes.

Scary—The swamp ghost is just way scary. Any good-aligned character who looks at the swamp ghost must make a successful Will save (DC 17) or be frightened. Once a character has made the Will save, he or she is immune to Scary for the rest of the day.

OLD SKOOL

KYLE HUNTER'S

DOWNER

Seeking a preemptive strike, a small band of adventurers have descended into the labyrinth lair of a loathsome beholder. After apparently killing the group's bard, a tenacious drow guard named Downer has managed to split up the party.

PART TWO: THE PROFESSIONALS

WHAT NOW, LITTLE MAN?
WE WOULDN'T BE HAVING THIS BIJOU PALAVER IF YOU HADN'T NIFFED OUR JOGGERING OMEE!
WHY, THAT'S PARLYAREE, THE UNION'S THIEVES' CANT!
OF COURSE! I'M SHOP STEWARD OF GIVER AND TAKER'S LOCAL 46.

UNBELIEVABLE! YOU BLOODY @$$!
MAGIC MISSLES? ARE YOU THAT TAPPED OUT, LUV? YOU THINK ONE'S GOING TO JUST SQUIRT THROUGH MY SPELL RESISTANCE? PLEASE.
LISTEN, THIS HAS BEEN FUN, BUT YOU TWO BETTER SCARPER DOWN AND OUT THAT WELL OVER THERE. SOMEONE'S BOUND TO BE BY SOON WITH YOU LOT RUNNING AROUND DOWN HERE.
HEH.
MMMPH!
REMEMBER, I'VE GOT LEGITIMATE GRIEVANCES. SEND A GUILD REP!
GOOD LUCK, GAJO!
MY, MY DOWNER, HAVEN'T YOU BEEN HARD UP SINCE YOUR OLD LADY KICKED IT?
INDEED. LETTING THEM GO? NOT VERY PROFESSIONAL, OR EVIL.
COME WITH US. OUR BELOVED BOSS, LORD MANGLECRAMPS, WANTS TO SEE YOU.
TO BE CONTINUED

Story and art by **Kyle Stanley Hunter**. Lettering by **Sean Glenn**. A **Super Unicorn** production. **www.superunicorn.com**